

THE THREE GREAT PROPHETS  
OF THE WORLD

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PROPHETS OF THE WORLD

MOSES, JESUS

AND

MUHAMMAD

BY

LORD HEADLEY

AUTHOR OF "A WESTERN AWAKENING TO ISLAM," ETC. ETC.

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THIS LITTLE WORK IS DEDICATED  
WITH EVERY MARK OF REGARD AND  
FRIENDSHIP TO MY VERY DEAR BROTHER  
IN ISLAM

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN, IMAM OF THE MOSQUE  
WOKING

WHO HAS BEEN MY FAITHFUL FRIEND AND MENTOR  
FOR MANY YEARS PAST

EL FAROOQ  
(HEADLEY)



## FOREWORD

THE spirit of adventure, that seeking for improvement and advancement, which has for generations marked the British race and spread our language and our flag in all parts of the world might well now be turned in a direction leading towards increased prosperity and a sounder code of ethics.

When a country shows itself to be thoroughly bored by its religion from which it turns away with relief to secular amusements such as dances, picture shows, golf etc. there must be something wrong. Now it is an indisputable fact that for some years past the attendances at Christian Churches have been slowly but surely going down: in some cases the congregations are so small that it seems almost a farce to hold a service at all.

I do not think this falling off is due to any craving for atheism, as some people have suggested, it is far more likely that educated people, guided by reason as well as high principles, do not like having their intelligences outraged by being told in parrot-like phrases that they cannot be saved if they do not subscribe to this or that dogma which consigns them to perdition if they dare to question its truth. It is well known that the dogmas of Christianity were started by Monks and

Priests some 300 years after Christ's time. The Trinity, The Atonement, The Divinity of Christ, The Immaculate Conception, and the necessity of the Sacraments are all dogmatic, and yet solemn faced men will tell one seriously that it is impossible to be saved without believing in them all! My earliest recollections of religion are unpleasant, being associated with the idea of an angry God who had created me, "a sinful child of wrath", and was ever looking out for an excuse for burning me in a hot fire, and that it was only by killing his only Son that my "wrathfulness" could be blotted out and that I could hope to sit on the same cloud with my dear relatives singing and playing the harp for all eternity. The alternatives were not attractive, and my belief in God's fairness and goodness was rudely shaken but not destroyed when I was a child of tender years.

It does not astonish me at all to hear so many questions asked every day concerning Islam. On every side earnest enquirers come to me or write with most pertinent enquiries, and it is wonderful how many there are really and truly Muslims without knowing it themselves. This is the time when a simple and pure faith is wanted and I feel that it needs but a little more publicity to bring into the fold tens of thousands of Britishers who have privately discarded the narrow bigotry of the creeds they have been brought up in.

Only ten years ago, the founder of the Muslim Mis-

sion, Woking, came to this land and commenced his activities by starting the "Islamic Review". He could hardly imagine the fruitful harvest that his labours, indefatigable and persevering as they were, would bring so soon. For years, no one took any notice of him, but his voice, feeble but sweet, began to grow strong, and to-day his words command an appreciative audience in many quarters. The force of his pen, which he wields with facility and rapidity, is felt by his readers. I wish he could devote more of his time to the production of some standard works on different aspects of Islam, as it is satisfactory to know that much good work has been done by him and other workers of the Muslim Mission at Woking, to correct the misleading representations which were spread about concerning the Faith. The spade work is nearly finished and the era of advancement approaches. The Western world needs a more extensive spread of Muslim literature, especially when people on all sides are making such pressing enquiries about Islam.

Many of these, while thoroughly in accord with Islamic teaching, cannot face the comments of their friends and relations. Only a few years ago, I myself was not quite free from vindictive remarks—I had—"deserted the religion of my fathers". "I was apostate". "I could not be saved" etc. So I pointed out that I could hardly have deserted a faith which had never meant anything

to me, but which I openly professed in order to obey my parents and please them.

✓ What we want now is a living religion to comfort the souls of those who *might* slide from Christianity into idolatry or atheism. Followers of Islam do not attempt to force their opinions on others and anything like compulsion is entirely forbidden by the Qur-án. The absolute fairness of Islam is what has struck most of the people to whom I have explained various points. It cannot be right to be without any religion—though what are called religious people are often so disagreeable and uncharitable—but do let us choose that faith *which is least hampered by improbabilities or absurdities*.

✓ I feel sure that if the people of England fully grasped what Islam really is, common sense, and the natural desire we all have to use our reasoning faculties as well as our emotions, would do much to remove the misunderstandings which exist. It is I think much to the discredit of certain persons that they have wilfully spread abroad incorrect accounts of Muhammad's work and teaching and have generally misrepresented Islam to Western nations. To show that Islam stands on a firm foundation and is a religion appealing strongly to the intellect as well as to the natural sentiments engrafted in human nature, should now be our closest duty.

✓ There are many customs in the East which are different from our own and which have wrongly taken a

## FOREWORD

part of religion whereas they are not so. The Spirit of Islam is exactly the same to-day as it was thirteen hundred years ago; the charity and love inculcated differs not from those sweet attributes as applied by the Holy Prophet when he freely forgave all his deadly enemies.

### THE SPIRIT OF ISLAM.

When war and pestilence were rife, and dear ones passed away,  
Sublimest Faith supported us, enabling us to pray  
For hearts most thoroughly purified, for minds like saints of old,  
And souls attuned to those whom Thou hast garnered in Thy Fold.

O grant us that in simple Faith—surrender to Thy Will  
We may show love to Thee and Thine, nor doubt Thy power to fill  
With joy our lives, as on we pass, and sorrows leave behind,  
Looking to Thee, our only Guide, the Light of all Mankind.

These lines give a faint idea of the feelings of the true Muslim—he who has resigned his will to God's Will and who looks to the time when he may return to his Maker.

In the following pages I have tried to show that between the three Prophets, Moses, Christ and Muhammad there is the strange difference that both Moses and Christ left the world full of sorrow at the miserable state of humanity, but that Muhammad was able to leave a world which was in a far better state than when He came into it. Then there was the question of credence; of course 600 years makes a difference in the probability of historic narrative and from this and other circumstances I gather that if we accept the history of Moses

and Christ as correct, we must, a fortiori, accept the record of Muhammad. There were four points to be considered:—

1. The condition of the world when they appeared.
2. Their personal influence on those around them.
3. How they expressed their feelings as to their success when they left the world.
4. The world after; what was the immediate result of their influence?

✓Of course Muhammad is more a historic character than either Moses or Christ; the Qur-án was compiled in his lifetime and what else we know of him was at any rate actual history written very soon after his death; but the records of the others were probably put together at least some centuries after their death. —

I have also given a very brief sketch of the life of the Prophet.

In these pages I confined my remarks to the records of these three great men as accepted by their respective followers. A Muslim must accept all of them as true prophets, but I wonder how a Jew or a Christian can deny the same respect and allegiance to Muhammad, which they reserve for Moses and Jesus, in the face of the work which he did in the furtherance of humanity. Invidious comparisons are not desirable, but if the facts recorded in the Bible are sufficient in the eye of a Jew or a Christian to accept Moses or Jesus as Messengers

from the Most high, Muhammad is, a fortiori, more entitled to claim such a position.

There is one matter which I should touch on as it has been so often pushed to the front and used as a sort of bugbear to frighten women. I refer to polygamy. Very few Muslims have more than one wife, and no one in this country need to be in the least alarmed lest the introduction of Islam as a recognized religion should alter the laws of a Western nation.

Polygamy, practiced in the East, from the earliest times, is pointed out by over-zealous but unscrupulous traducers, as a "Muhammadan institution". As we know, and as the Christian missionaries also know, it is nothing of the kind.

Polygamy existed in the House of Jacob and was practiced unscrupulously. Jesus belonged to the same tribe. His own family was not free from it. He neither abolished it nor made any reform in the institution. It continued in Christendom for more than fourteen centuries. The civil law based on the institution of Justinian came to abolish it recently.

Muhammad broke up the idols and effected innumerable improvements in the midst of heathenish surroundings in a country sunk in all the darkness of pagan idolatry. Amongst his good works, he placed restrictions on the existing polygamy. He limited the number of wives a man might have and subjected the practice to

such strict conditions as to make it impracticable in the average case. By regulating the marriage customs which then existed, in the whole world, the Prophet paved the way to higher ideals respecting morality.

Polygamy is not a substantial law in Islam. It is only an adjective or a remedial law, which comes into operation when some evil is to be remedied, in the absence of which, such practice in Islam does not fall far short of sin.

It is possible that some of my readers will ridicule my suggestion that Islam is a better religion than the curious medley of antiquated improbabilities which stand for modern Christianity. They will point to the great charitable institutions, hospitals, schools and homes for suffering humanity run on Christian lines. But one fails to see why these charitable institutions should be ascribed to a religion which could not give birth to them for more than 1,700 years. They are the growth of modern culture and owe their origin to quite different external causes—the greatest among them being Islam in Spain. Islam highly speaks of these charities in its teaching and brought them into existence in all Muslim countries within two centuries after its birth. Islam can claim superiority to modern culture in one respect—Muslim Universities opened their doors in Baghdad in the days of Nizam-ul-Mulk and in Granada in the days of Abdul Rahaman to students without distinction of caste, colour



or creed, where they were looked after, boarded and lodged at the public expense.

Besides hospitals, libraries and other institutions, there were public baths in every town in Moorish Spain, which were demolished in the time of Ferdinand, because cleanliness was strange to Christian piety in those days. Besides it is no proof that these institutions could not be run every bit as well—perhaps better—under the aegis of some other simpler and less contentious religion. Such a religion is Islam, which is in very truth, Christianity shorn of the man-made dogmas. In Islam there is complete freedom of the soul. There are no priests, or saints or virgins to invoke. No tolls to pay on the road to Heaven. No need of candles or masses. Each human being has an equal right to the Keys of Heaven which can be used by any man, woman or child without any external aid of any kind from prophet, priest or king.

The strongest and most convincing argument we can bring forward to support our claims and win Western sympathy is that *no idea of atheism or idolatry can possibly exist in the mind of the true believer*; and this fact should go far to mark Islam as the great Religion or Faith of the future. We cannot fail to observe in Christianity a lack of cohesion and uniformity, but in Islam we find all that should satisfy the created in the desire to be at one with and to return to, the Creator,

the Ever-Present and Omnipotent Protector of all creatures.

1. 1. 1923.

EL-FAROOQ  
(HEADLEY)

P.S.

Many of our friends have helped in the good work of spreading the Truth as found in our simple and Blessed Faith and amongst the last to assist is Dr. Muhammad Ghous, of Taiping, Perak, who has contributed to the publication of the present volume.

H.

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## MOSES, JESUS AND MUHAMMAD.

THESE three great Prophets, springing from the same stock and race, the Semitic, born and reared in the lands of Arabia and Palestine, have ever been regarded as the chief exponents of religion among the people of the Near East. There were numerous lesser teachers, but these are the chief ones as far as mission and importance go.

It is necessary to bear in mind that, according to the needs of the time and the requirements of the people concerned, the Prophets and messengers are sent by God for the purpose of revealing the truth to mankind and correcting the errors into which they have fallen. But rightly speaking and thinking one must not make any radical difference between them. They all play their allotted parts in the world's regeneration—at the Will of the Almighty so they give the messages and so we are instructed: truly we are the clay and the great Creator our potter.

God knows far better than man, the needs and the limitations that exist in poor humanity and He knows the Messenger required in every particular case.

Where Prophets and great men appear and carry on an important work of reclamation, man frequently exalts them above their station and clothes them with divinity, investing them with the attributes which exclusively be-

long to the Deity: others again regard them in the light of impostors and pretended Prophets. Both these aspects are wrong in their attitude. Due reverence and respect must be given to the Messengers of the Supreme and man must not conceive that he knows more of the inner workings of spiritual evolution and human destiny than the Creator, and must not judge between them and make exceptions, but regard each one with the reverence due to his particular station and Mission.

It is in this light, we view the lives and teachings of the three great Semitic Prophets, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. It should be borne in mind that there are two individual factors connected with Prophethood:—first, the pressing needs of the time which rendered necessary their presence on earth; and secondly, the thoroughness and comprehensiveness with which the mission was carried out. In dealing with the Divine Messengers, it is essential that the mind be kept free from personal distinctions of creed and racial prejudices.

God is the Absolute and Universal Truth, although He is seen under many different aspects, according to various limitations of the messengers coming to represent different view-points of the Universal Sphere of Truth, each according to the race and period to which he belongs. Hence it is that the majority of the great teachers focus one particular virtue or quality as the basis of their teaching, thus—the basis of Buddhism is *Compassion*; of Confucianism *social virtues*; of Christianity *Love*; and that of Islam *Submission to the Will of God*.

Without drawing any distinctions, it will be readily conceded that the last, Islam, includes or embraces all its predecessors because it is submissive to the Divine

purposes and takes the heart and the mind direct to the Throne of God.

It is my intention to recount simply what I read of these great Semitic Messengers in recorded history from three or four points of view—the condition of the time in which they appeared, the task they had to perform, the condition of the time under which they left the world—and the influence they exercised on the people around them.

### MOSES.

Moses born in Egypt under the rule of the Pharaohs was a child of the enslaved Israelites who were in bondage. He was reared at the Court of Pharaoh and was said to have been learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, which, judging from modern researches and discoveries must have been very profound indeed, and to have absorbed much knowledge of the modern sciences as well as of others with which we are but little acquainted and are now regarded as lost arts. We are told that the Egyptians were hard taskmasters, the Priest-Kings ruled with a firm hand and the yoke was heavy. Moses was deputed by God to free His people from their bondage, as the following text shows:

“And the Lord said: I have surely seen the affliction of My people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.

“And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

“Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel

is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

“Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt.” (Exodus, Ch. 3, V. 7—10.)

Egypt, at this time was possessed of a highly developed culture and was in fact, the foremost civilized power in the world. Its rule virtually extended over the African Continent and it had trade relations with distant countries, notably along the Mediterranean sea-board. It had a highly elaborated code of Laws, Religio-Political and Social, which imposed on the people a high ethical standard together with a conviction and basing of action on the future Life, which was an important factor in determining human actions and conduct. The moral standard was high and uplifting.

The mission of Moses was to liberate his people from subjection and bondage and to lead them to the promised Land, under commands from God and he was endowed with power to aid him in his work. The wandering in the desert for forty years, during which, he received on Mount Sinai, the Commandments of the Law, a moral code sufficient for their requirements and spiritual needs. They, surrounded by nations sunk in polytheism and idolatry and not of a high moral nature, were selected as the Chosen People to carry the Torch of Light of the Unity of the Supreme Lord, but did not rise to the occasion and lapsed into the worship of many gods, fell in the moral scale, hence the calamities and disabilities and troubles under which the Jews have suffered. The setting up of the golden calf in the Wilderness, which was held as an object of worship and the falling off of the Israelites from the worship of One God, showed this most clearly.

Moses died on mount Pisgah, in the sight of the Promised Land. The Promised Land may be referred to in a mystical sense, as the realization of the Divine Beatitudes and Ideals which are obtained and enjoyed by the observance of the Divine Commands. This was taught by Moses, but not accepted by the children of Israel. Their leader saw the Goal, the Promised Land afar off, just as the Soul sees the Divine beauties, also afar off. The subsequent history of the Israelites is a record of frequent lapses into polytheism and idolatry, for which they were punished. Various Kings and Prophets attempted and instituted reforms but in vain. The pride and stiff-necked nature of the Hebrews would not permit them to worship the Supreme with humility and resignation. They had absorbed from Chaldea a magical system which was highly elaborated in its ritual and detail, of which traces are to be found in the Book of Tobit and elsewhere, also they clung to externalism and their faith was mainly centered in formalism and the outer observances of the Torah or Law, rather than the inner or spiritual practices. They inclined towards material things and earthly sovereignty and they looked forward to a Messiah who should be regarded in the light of an earthly sovereign rather than a spiritual leader and guide.

### JESUS.

Jesus of Nazareth came on his Divine Mission as a Reformer to his people, who had up to that time been under the Mosaic dispensation, of which they had in their lapses into externalism and formalism only absorbed the outer shell or husk, and not the inner spiritual mean-



ing. The time was one of stress. The peoples of Europe and western Asia were under the yoke of Rome, which, although it gave protection to the subject peoples and was the inheritor of a comparatively high culture, was a hard taskmaster. It was, under the Emperors the incarnation of material power and brute force. Judea was a Roman province, ruled by Herod as a tributary king. The Tower of Antonina at Jerusalem, was held by a Roman garrison. The old mythology was dying. Man no longer believed in the old gods of the pagan faiths and was looking and waiting for light. The western world was expecting a prophet, even the Romans expected one, who was said to be the Emperor Augustus. The Jews were the successors of those who had been chosen to be the transmitters of pure monotheism to the world, but had not risen to the occasion. To them came Jesus, to free their faith from the formalism and superficiality which had degraded it—and to spiritualize it.

He is said to have been taught by the Essene fraternity, who had a branch of their community at En-gedi, by the shore of the Dead Sea. This was the only one of the divisions of the Jews which had preserved the spirit of the ancient teaching. The Jews were to be given one more opportunity. He began his mission, but they were divided in faith, holding but lightly to the formalism of their creed and leaning to the various schools of philosophy of the time, which were clinging to the remains of the old faith. He endeavoured to inculcate into them spiritual truths, charity, humility, the love of God and their neighbour, and forgiveness of those who transgressed and repented—and he preached of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Jews adhered to the

letter of the Mosaic code which partook strongly of the old sacrificial spirit which prevailed in the worship of Jehovah (Tetragrammaton) which required a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people. In very early times the Canaanites as well as the Phoenicians had offered human victims to Baal and Moloch, which custom was not unknown to the Jews and doubtless laid the foundation of the idea of the atonement represented in the Jewish offering of the Scape goat which was sent into the Wilderness as an offering to Azazel, the Spirit of the Wilderness. This is evidently the origin of the opinion that Jesus Christ was a sin offering to redeem the fallen Adam through the sacrifice of his blood as expressed in the words: "This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins". It is not my intention to argue about the necessity for such sacrifices but to point to the similarity of methods used for propitiating the Supreme being at all times in the earths' history. Something had to be put to death or otherwise inconvenienced in order to keep ourselves in the good books of Heaven and in favour with the Almighty.

The Jesus of Paul does not harmonise with the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels the ideas of the one as to sin, death, reconciliation and atonement being widely different from those of the other. I judge His mission from his own attributed words in the four Gospels. He does not, according to His own words, come to give a new religious code, but to purify and spiritualize the existing one and free it from the shackles which have been thrown around it by the scribes and pharisees. He says that "They sit in Moses' seat". His object was to

create respect and submission for the spirit and not the letter of the ancient faith given by Moses. They had the Torah, it is true, but it was externally and not internally interpreted. He brought the Gospel of Love and Harmony instead of the Law of Retribution. His Mission was to the Jews, the scattered Sheep of the House of Israel, and not to the Gentiles.

Sacerdotalism, the enemy of true inner religion, had sapped the Jewish faith, reducing it to formalism and ceremonial which almost invariably bring unbelief and hypocrisy in their train: then followed a disbelief in and disregard for things spiritual together with the inevitable selfishness and self indulgence. This is clearly indicated in many passages in the New Testament, as for instance in the question of Nicodemus and the lack of knowledge respecting the spiritual re-birth.

The Jews were to have been the transmitters of Christ's teachings but, however, these teachings were handed on, in a perverted and misapplied form, by Paul, who was an adherent of the exclusive Jewish school of religion.

Jesus had in his reforming mission a much easier task than Muhammad. The Jews had been in direct touch with and influenced by the civilizations of Assyria, Egypt and the Mediterranean peoples, deriving much knowledge and culture from them. The accounts we read of Solomon show that he reigned over a more or less cultured people and, by his dealings with Hiram of Tyre, Tarshish and Sheba, that the Jews were not an isolated race. The trouble of the Jews was their pride, hypocrisy, materialism, and the tendency towards polytheism and idolatry.

They had an admirable code of morals and ethics framed for them by Divine inspiration which they had failed to take advantage of. The substitution of the letter for the spirit was the defect which Jesus came to remedy and to substitute for it a faith free from the errors which had crept in; also to preach charity, humility, forbearance and brotherly love. They were not given to moral lapses such as were found in the Arabs, and so the task of Jesus was much lighter and easier. Also, in the case of Moses, we are told that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and his code as embodied in the Ten Commandments which were received on Mount Sinai, was not directed against the errors and vices prevailing in Arabia, against which Muhammad had to struggle. From a comparison of the work and achievement of these two Prophets, it must undeniably be stated that Muhammad's task and achievements were far in advance of his predecessors.

### MUHAMMAD.

It is necessary to eliminate what may be termed the "personal equation" when considering the life history of any of the Prophets. We should thus regard Muhammad and his life work quite independently of the opinion entertained of him by the Muslims, or the views expounded in the Qur-án. We want to regard him as a historical character, viewed simply as a man whose life and deeds may be judged from the point of view of a human being only.

Muhammad, the Prophet of Arabia, was sent at the most critical time in the world's history. The Roman Empire which was mainly responsible for the mainten-

ance of order in Europe, had fallen under the assaults of the Goths, Vandals, and Avars, aided by internal corruption.

Christianity had degenerated from the pure form taught by Jesus; formalism and the worship of angels and saints had crept in and the old faith had died. Christianity was, from the nature of its adherents and followers, not eligible to carry belief with it. The world was fast reeling towards the blackness of utter chaos. The Christianity of the time had developed many of the traits of the pagan faiths, some in an accentuated form, basing its ceremonial on the frame work of the solar worship and introducing the worship of the Divine Mother under the form of the Virgin Mary. As to morals, education, knowledge and culture of all kinds, they may truly be said to have been non-existent.

Europe was sunk in the most abysmal ignorance, and the more ignorant an individual was, the more spiritual he was deemed to be. Such was Europe.

The condition of Arabia at the time of Muhammad's birth was a reflection of the general condition existing in Europe and western Asia. The Byzantine Empire and its church were notorious for their ignorance, superstition and disorder—moral, social, and individual. Vice and immorality were rampant, in places high and low in the church and out of it. Among the Semites of Arabia, perhaps owing to the distance from the great centres, the lapse was greater, being intensified by tribal and racial customs. In short, the disorder was almost universal.

Prior to the advent of Islam, Arabia was in a deplorable state. The sense of morality was altogether

wanting, adultery and sex irregularities were practised and unblushingly and shamelessly published in immoral poetry. Step-mothers were inherited and marriages were contracted with them as well as with sisters and aunts. Drunkenness was very prevalent with its attendant profligacy and debauchery. Gambling and games of chance were favourite amusements and usury was freely practised. Female slaves were trained and instructed in the arts of singing and dancing and allowed and encouraged to dispose of their favours for money which was retained for their owners. Robbery, pillage and murder were of frequent occurrence. Females captured in wars or raids were made slaves by the victors. A superstitious belief in charms, omens, talismans, fetiches, and various forms of divination was wide spread.

The old Law, "An eye for an eye" or "blood for blood" was the cry in all cases of murder or homicide. Cruelty and savagery existed in every direction and numerous cases are recorded of exceptional brutality even among the women. Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufyan, ate the heart of Hamza, the uncle of Muhammad, who had fallen in battle, out of hatred for him. The women used to wear rosaries round their necks with the hearts of slain enemies as the beads. Idolatry was the religion of the Semitic tribes. Within the Ka'aba was the image of Abraham with the divining arrows in his hand and the ram standing beside him, also the statue of Ishmael. The pantheon of Mecca consisted of 360 idols, one to be worshipped on each day in the year, shaped into animal and human forms. Human sacrifice was practised, parents sacrificing their own children, even dragging them by force to the sacrificial altars. Female children

were not considered worthy to be sacrificed but were buried alive instead.

Judaism and Christianity had sought to introduce reforms but failed in the attempt to bring about any improvement or departure from the existing errors, as even Sir William Muir acknowledges, and the general condition of things temporal and spiritual was appallingly bad, in fact all centres of civilization were more or less decadent.

India, Persia, and Europe were degenerate and corrupted to a deplorable degree, but Arabia was by far the worst. The Roman world had some redeeming features, but Arabia had none. Tribal wars, feuds and vendettas were a constant source of trouble, unrest and strife.

Briefly, there were no factors which could be looked to for building up a settled civilized community—no code of law to guarantee individual rights and nothing to inspire confidence in any of those interested either in the arts or commerce of the country.

There was a very complete tradition as to certain tribal and clan ordinances, which however, did not serve to bind the tribes and clans together, but rather tended to separate them; of course this was probably peculiar to the people of a nomadic race.

Muhammad's task of improvement and reform was rendered peculiarly hard on account of the proud and sensitive nature of the Arabs; there were hundreds of difficulties he had to overcome and thousands of obstacles blocked the road he painfully traversed before he achieved his many wonderful successes. The results of his efforts were stupendous in their far-reaching effects

and when we consider that his mission lasted little over ten years and that what he did was single-handed, by his own unaided efforts during his own lifetime, we are astounded at the magnitude of his work and are forced to admit that he was a man towering—both in ideals and achievements—far above any of his contemporaries, predecessors or successors. As a merchant of strictest honesty and ability; as a warrior, in his campaigns and victories; as a statesman, by his wise and far seeing enactments; as a law-giver, by the code of laws which he laid down and which still forms the basis of the Muslim law; and as a Prophet by his insight and intuition as to the forces and influences ruling in the spiritual realm and shadowed down here as a reflection from above and demonstrating the laws which should rightly influence and guide human life and conduct, representing the Will of God towards man and the duties of man towards God. These gifts and attributes have not been denied to him by both his critics and opponents.

Apart from the mission to the separate races, which all prophets undertake there is the transmission of the idea to the surrounding nations. Moses came to teach the Hebrews, Jesus to reform the Jews, Muhammad, to lift up humanity of all nations and peoples. They also came as standard bearers to the world at large. Muhammad, after years of opposition and persecution, saw in his lifetime the results of his labours and the extention beyond the Arabian border. Their subsequent spread is a matter of history.

Reform in religion, if genuine, must necessarily be accompanied by a change in the mode of the outer or practical life. The one is only useful if followed by the



other. It would be like a shell without a kernel, or a shadow without a substance. Therefore the religious reform introduced by Muhammad accompanied as it was by a change in the nature of a transformation, reached its entelechy in the Arab life and character.

In Muhammad's last pilgrimage to Mecca, the year prior to his death, his Sermon on the Mount at Arafat, although less poetically beautiful than the one delivered by Jesus as well as less mystical, nevertheless appeals by its practical nature and strong common sense to developed minds, and is also adaptable to the requirements of inferior natures seeking positive and clear directions for moral and spiritual guidance. It embodies injunctions to safeguard life and property; it forbids usury; abolishes blood-feuds; enjoins kindness and equity to slaves and particularly emphasises that all Muslims are Brothers, and counsels that they should be strictly just in all their dealings with their fellow creatures.

MORAL INFLUENCE OF THE THREE, ON  
THEIR FOLLOWERS.

## MOSES.

THE personal and individual influence of Moses on the Israelites in their wanderings in the wilderness, kept them in subjection as long as they had a visible and human guiding influence; but their stubbornness and refusal to accept the spiritual guidance of which Moses was the accredited representative led them into murmurings and complaints of their hardships on the journey. When the pursuing Egyptians came in sight of them, they became afraid and said, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." Later, they complained of the want of water and 15 days after the departure, they murmured again, lamenting the flesh pots of Egypt and bewailing their hunger, still again they complained and Moses ensured them water and food, quails and manna. Whilst Moses was in communion and retreat on Mount Sinai for 40 days, they promised obedience, but, in his absence, they made a Golden Calf (a reminiscence of the

Bull of Apis of Egypt) and worshipped it, and made peace offerings to it. Aaron made the reply to Moses as an excuse for the making "that they are set on mischief."

The Children of Israel murmured against Moses and said, "Let us make a captain and let us return to Egypt" (Numbers, ch. 14 v. 4). The Qur-án says: ——"O my people enter the holy land which Allah has prescribed for you and turn not your backs, for then you will turn back losers." They said, "O Moses surely there is a strong race in it and we will on no account enter into it until they go out from it, so if they go out from it, then surely we will enter" and again, they said, "O Moses we shall never enter it so long as they are in it; go therefore you and your Lord, then fight you both, surely we will here sit down" (ch. 5 v. 21-24). Their pride, stiff-necked nature and materialism kept them bound to physical affairs and the objects of sense. The account of the spoliation of the Egyptians of their gold and silver is a testimony to the love of luxury and comfort which possessed them. The want of faith and sincerity in spite of the covenants which had been established is a feature in the character of the Israelites which shows their insincerity and faithlessness.

### JESUS.

The popular Messianic idea held by the Jews was the same as that held in their earlier history. They repudiated the Prophets as in the days of Eli and Samuel, pinned their faith on temporal and material things and wanted kings to rule them. They were soaked through and through with materialism. The time of Jesus was

one of great unrest and expectation, the heel of Rome was heavy and the Jews looked for political emancipation and freedom. The Jewish Apocalypse describes the Messiah as granting life to the nations which had submitted to Israel. Under the leadership of Joshua they had subjugated the surrounding peoples and expected to do the same now. The prevailing idea was a Kingdom of Glory in Palestine, with the capital at Jerusalem, where the Messiah was to rule; the dead were to arise from their graves and share the Messianic privileges. The whole idea was terrestrial. Jesus could not refuse the traditional terms nor could he accept the popular interpretation which believed that he had come to restore the Kingdom of David from whom he was said to have descended. He had recourse to flight when they wanted to make him king, and for this they followed him and hailed him on his entry into Jerusalem. But, later, when they found their hopes of an earthly kingdom not realized, they had not the spiritual conception of a heavenly one and repudiated him. His followers fell away, his disciples abandoned him and his apostle denied him, then came Calvary.

Jesus again and again refers to the want of faith and a low intellectual standard in the Jews. Mark (ch. 7, v. 5-9), "The Pharisees and Scribes asked him, 'Why walk thy disciples not according to the traditions of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?' He answered and said unto them, 'Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the com-

mandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups and many other such like things ye do.' And he said unto them, 'Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition (v. 13) making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition: which ye have delivered, and many such like things do ye.' Mark (ch. 9. v. 19). He answered him and said 'O faithless, generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you.'

#### MUHAMMAD.

From the very commencement of his mission career he disclaimed the possession of treasures out of which to enrich those who listened to his teaching and admitted that he had no extraordinary knowledge and was not a worker of the marvellous (Qur-án 7. 186) "Say I do not control any benefit or harm for my own soul except as Allah pleases; and had I known the unseen I would have had much of good and no evil would have touched me; I am nothing but a warner and a giver of good news to a people who believe." He did not have nor did he claim to possess that which allures mankind in general, that is, earthly possessions in abundance from which to bestow great gifts on his followers, he lived all his life in a frugal and abstemious manner and he had the ability or gift of drawing all men to him. All those who were brought under the charm of his personal influence, became his true followers—they loved him and did not turn back on him nor desert him. In the Qur-án (ch. 9. 111), he says, "Surely Allah has bought of the believers their persons and their property for this,

that they shall have the garden; they fight in Allah's way, so they slay and are slain, a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur-án; and Who is more faithful to His Covenant than Allah? Rejoice therefore in the pledge which you have made; and that is the mighty achievement."

The personal influence exercised by Muhammad on his followers is without parallel in the religious world. This loyalty and devotion impelled them to declare that, unlike the followers of Moses, they would not disobey the commands of God and refuse to accompany him to the Promised Land, but would stand by him in his defence and support, if such were needed, on his left and right side, before him and behind him to the death. These words and the promise were faithfully fulfilled at the Battle of Ohod, where in action, he was hard pressed by the enemy, fell down in a pit and fainted. He had received over 80 wounds, two of his helmet rings had been driven into his cheek, his face was covered with blood and one of his teeth was knocked out by a blow. The enemy was advancing, sending volleys of arrows and he was in great danger. Abu Bakr instantly went to his help and his example was followed by many. He was still in the pit and senseless; the fighting was hand to hand; his followers made a rampart around him of their bodies as a protection; many fell, but their places were instantly filled by others; women as well as men took part in the protection accorded to him on the field of Ohod. This unparalleled act of devotion, unique in religious history, is eloquent proof of the influence he exercised by the force of his character on his followers.

### CHAPTER III.

## HOW THEY LEFT THE WORLD.

### MOSES.

THE culmination of the work of a prophet will have to be judged by the condition of the peoples to whom his mission was directed at the time of his leaving the physical world: A tree is known by its fruits and a prophet is known by his works. As mentioned above, time and again, Moses had to face complaints and outbreaks of rebellious feeling among his followers. We read of the rebellion of Aaron and Miriam, which latter was punished with leprosy, but afterwards cured by Moses' intercession, and the attempts to return to the Egyptians, whose fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic they had the most pleasing recollections. They found a contrast in the quails and manna. For the attempted rebellion, two of the spies were punished with death and the Israelites were commanded to march backwards into the wilderness where they had to wander for 37 or 38 years longer. We read further of the rebellion of Korah. The lapse into idolatry oft repeated was punished (Numbers ch. 20. v. 12). And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron "Because ye believed Me not to sanctify Me in the eyes of the Children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." For this offence Moses was not to be allowed to enter into the Promised Land,

of which, however, he was permitted to have a sight, from Mount Pisgah, east of Jordan, where he died. There he died, having had leadership of the Israelites during their long wandering, and faced complaints, opposition and rebellion in the course of his arduous work. Few of those who set out from Egypt, entered into their inheritance in the Promised Land; 40 years had gone by, one generation in full since their departure. Of his active supporters, Joshua and Caleb were the most loyal and the former was his successor. The condition in which he left the Israelites was the same as that in which he had found them, full of complaints; if they had luxuries and the delicacies of Egypt, they were satisfied, if not, they complained, firstly of water, and secondly, of quails, and lastly of solitude. They were a people of material inclinations only. Immediately prior to the ascent of Mount Pisgah, to view the land of Canaan, his last words to the Children of Israel, before he gave them his song which set forth God's mercy and vengeance, were as follows:— (Deut. ch. 31. v. 25—30) "That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, 'Take this Book of the Law, and put in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.' For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck, behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death? Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record it against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves,



and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands."

Thus it will be seen that he left the Children of Israel, full of misgivings and fears as to their future actions etc., for right well did he understand them, having had 40 years experience of them.

### JESUS

also was a messenger to the same recalcitrant, stiff-necked people, and his experience was similar to that of Moses, allowing a slight variation for time elapsed. A leopard cannot change his spots, neither can a people change their character. He clearly realized the Hebrew character. Matthew (ch. 23). "Woe unto ye, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for neither go ye in yourselves, neither suffer them that are entering to go in"; he also styles them "blind guides". The animosity against him of the scribes and pharisees, filled him with sorrow, as well as the opposition he encountered in general. The impending destruction of the Temple and the days of calamity which were almost at hand filled him with grief, for he, without doubt, saw them coming also his own fate. The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Matthew is eloquent as to the condition of the Jews and shows that he left them and his mission full of trouble and disappointment. His lament over Jerusalem, the Sacred City "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest those that are sent to thee. How often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen

gathereth her chickens under her wing and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate." This was amply fulfilled in the terrible siege of the city and its fall to the victorious Roman army under Titus in the year 60 A.D.

The last words of Jesus, before his betrayal by Judas into the hands of the priests clearly show great despondency and sorrow over the coming events and trials (Matthew ch. 26. v. 38-45). "Then he said unto them, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me'. And he went a little further, and fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt'. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak'. He went away the second time, and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, Thy Will be done'. And he came and found them asleep again for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them 'sleep on now and take your rest; behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners'. The whole trend of these short and plaintive sentences is on a parity with the lament over Jerusalem and bears comparison with the last words of Moses.

## MUHAMMAD.

Far different from the last mentioned was the spiritual state of Arabia at the close of Muhammad's life. To have lived as Muhammad lived and to have died as Muhammad died, to have conquered Arabia with a smile and a Book and to die, surrounded by his faithful followers and sorrowing adherents, what more could have been desired?

In his last pilgrimage to Mecca, the year before his death, having successfully completed his mission, the following sermon was given from the Mount of Arafat near Mecca to a vast concourse of assembled Muslims.

"Ye people, listen to my words, for I know not whether another year will be vouchsafed to me after this year to find myself amongst you at this place."

"Your lives and property are sacred and inviolable amongst one another until ye appear before the Lord, as this day and this month is sacred for all; and (remember) ye shall have to appear before your Lord, Who shall demand from you an account of all your actions. . . . Ye people, ye have rights over your wives, and your wives have rights over you. . . . Treat your wives with kindness and love. Verily ye have taken them on the security of God, and have made their persons lawful to you by the words of God." "Keep always faithful to the trust reposed in you and avoid sins." "Usury is forbidden. The debtor shall return only the principal; and the beginning will be made with (the loans of) my uncle Abbas, son of Abd-ul-Muttalib. . . . Henceforth the vengeance of blood

practices in the days of Paganism is prohibited; and all blood-feud abolished commencing with the murder of my cousin Rabia son of Harith son of Abd-ul-Muttalib" . . .

"And your slaves See that ye feed them with such food as ye eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff ye wear; and if they commit a fault which ye are not inclined to forgive, then part from them, for they are the servants of the Lord and are not to be harshly treated."

"Ye people listen to my words and understand the same. Know *that all Muslims are brothers unto one another*. Ye are one brotherhood. Nothing that belongs to another is lawful unto his brother, unless freely given out of goodwill. Guard yourselves from committing injustice."

"Let him that is present tell it to him that is absent. Haply he that shall be told may remember better than he who hath heard it."

This was the finale of his work and its influence and the way it was received by the Muslims shows the happiest ending to a strenuous and successful life.

We will briefly enumerate in a few words what Muhammad did for Arabia and for the world when he established his religion and his civilization among the people of his country.

In a single generation, namely, his lifetime, Muhammad removed all disorders and evils, as if by the touch of a magic hand. Infanticide was abolished. Gambling and drunkenness disappeared. Sexual promiscuity and vice were suppressed. Slavery was regulated and placed on a just and equitable basis. Blood-feuds and ven-

dettas, those barriers to unity, were done away with and the spirit of brotherhood was established among the people and behold, Arabia was a nation, inspired and formed by the genius of one man and one man alone; and a religion established which has stood the test of 1,300 years as a carrier of the doctrine of the unity of God to all nations and peoples; and a civilization formulated which has spread far and wide over alien peoples carrying culture, sobriety and moral and religious precepts with it as a rescuer from the darkness of ignorance and barbarism; and as a writer says "making Europe indebted to it for its intellectual existence". Evolved from the mind of a single man, if it be regarded as of human source, but out of Divine Inspiration, if he be regarded as a Messenger from God to uplift him and to raise him to a knowledge of his duty to God and to himself.

CHAPTER IV.  
THE WORLD AFTER.

MOSES.

AFTER the death and burial of Moses on Mount Pisgah, the command of the Israelites devolved on Joshua, who had shown himself to be an able captain and a good leader. The conquest of Palestine proceeded apace. Wars, sieges and battles were of frequent occurrence down to the time of Saul, who fell in battle or its equivalent. Saul was elected king, at the request of the Israelites for one, and was succeeded by David who waged successful war with the Philistines. He seems to have finally established them in a settled kingdom or state. Then came the era of Solomon, which is said to have been one of great splendour. The erection of the Temple on Mount Moriah with friendly help from Hiram of Tyre, was an achievement. There was also, intercourse with Egypt, Solomon having married a daughter of the Pharaohs. Moses, in his priestly ordinations in Leviticus, established a code which must justly be said to have gone far to establish the peculiar personality of the Jews as distinct from the surrounding nations. They have always been a race apart from others, the real reason does not come within the scope of this paper. The regulations have kept them a healthy race, immune from certain physical troubles. They were familiar with the laws of hygiene and sanitation; there had been

developed for thousands of years in Egypt, an elaborate political, religious and social system which Moses had the benefit of, hence under favourable conditions, a settled government, and a wise ruler, such as Solomon, they prospered, flourished and became a power in the land. Later, they came, through unwise rulers, in conflict with the Assyrians, who over-ran the country, carrying the Ten Tribes into captivity at Babylon. After many years they returned to Palestine, chastened and greatly altered; from that time, their entire history is modified by a Chaldean influence which profoundly affected them.

All their progress must be attributed to Moses alone, and his wise counsels. He was the only great man as a law-giver that they had. Joshua was a war-captain, not a law-giver. Eli, Samuel, Jeremiah etc. were simply prophets and seers.

### JESUS.

Till the events which led up to Calvary the adherents of Jesus were numerically weak, but the coming down alive from the Cross, popularly known as the Resurrection, had filled them with faith and renewed hope. Jesus had foretold that he would rise again in three days. He was alive, although in a swoon; his followers, with their faith strengthened and renewed, found new life and began to preach the Gospel of the Lord. Paul (a converted Jew) joined them, but he had different ideas, having become a convert after the Crucifixion. His different views made him an object of suspicion and dislike; he was virtually expelled from the community and began to preach to the Gentiles. He taught certain

things not allowable by the Jewish law. This led to schism and the formation of sects within the rising Christian Church, which was essentially a Reformed Judaism which held that Jesus was a prophet and taught according to the Jewish faith and law. The Pauline section, however, identified him with the Logos of the Alexandrian philosophy. From this followed division after division, sect after sect. After the deaths of Peter and Paul, came further divisions until the sects were exceedingly numerous. Arians, Monophysites, Nestorians, Carpocratians, Basilideans, Gnostics, Marionites, Sabelians, Valentinians were the chief among an almost endless number. This was about the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries.

With the destruction of the Churches at the sacred places in Palestine by the Persian armies under Chosroes (Khusrau), came a blow that the Church did not recover from. Faith went with the desecrated and destroyed shrines. Then followed a deplorable time; wars, persecutions, massacres, crusades, the moral and social corruption of Europe and the dark ages, when there was hardly a glimmer of intellectual life in Europe. The real teaching of Jesus had been obscured by sacerdotalism and priest-craft which entirely masked the real spirit of his doctrines. In the mediæval ages, Mr. Lecky says: — "The history of the Catholic ascendancy was the most deplorable in the history of the human mind." Draper and other writers confirm this statement. Priests monopolized everything and perverted everything; those whose minds were above the lowest level of ignorance and superstition fled to the solitudes and monasteries. The gifts of the mental and natural qualities and faculties were not given to man to be sterilized in monastic or



ascetic lives. The only class that had leisure or capacity for study, the monks, were forbidden to learn. This is contrary to the laws of nature; hence we find that a race mentally and physically alive and active—the Arabs—easily surpassed the Western nations in every department of activity, whether physical, mental or spiritual. One retrograded its peoples, the other advanced them. The intellectuals of Europe, such as there were, studied under Muslim professors in the colleges in Spain and it was there that Columbus studied geography. Religion and science went hand in hand and helped each other, they were not, as in Christian Europe, antagonistic and contradictory.

Modern civilization is not by any means entirely due to Christianity, for certain sects did their level best—or worst—to suppress or overthrow education, science or advancement of all kinds.

Our present civilization is very largely due to the benefits and results of Islamic culture in Spain, Sicily and the Near East, which permeated European life after the Reformation and during the Renaissance.

The Church had always been the bitter enemy of progress and enlightenment. All measures destined to benefit the community in general, such as better conditions of labour, education and temperance were opposed steadily and consistently by the Church, both established and non-conformist. The bishops in their attitude in the House of Lords by their voting on these measures showed themselves hostile to improvement. The Wesleyans, at the beginning of the temperance movement forbade the use of their chapels or meeting-places for lectures and meetings.

Slavery is a principle which expresses the real feeling of man for man, in both aspects, the civil and the religious. Christianity had approved it and practiced it. The monastic communities held slaves and rarely freed them, they being corporate property, their condition was bad, they were not fed or clothed like their owners, as Islam insists, but were serfs and chattels purely. Later in time, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Lands, who traded in Guinea, owned slaves on their plantations in Barbadoes and did not even give them religious instruction. The Baptists and Methodists in U.S.A, owned large numbers, 225,000 and 250,000 respectively. In the Southern States, girls were sold at auction, special qualifications being that they were Christians. In London, in 1760, there were 80,000 black slaves, who were regularly advertised and bequeathed in wills. Mr. Brace says, "The African slave trade was the most dreadful curse that has perhaps ever afflicted humanity" and admits that "the guilt of this great crime rests on the Christian Church as an organized body."

Islam abolished the various ways of manumission. No one could purchase the life of another person. One kind of what one may call slavery was allowed; that is, men taken by your right hands, or, in other words, those who were war-prisoners. They were treated as slaves but the Prophet raised their status. They were given the best treatment in the family of the master, equal treatment, lodgment, food and clothing. They had to pay the ransom for their liberation, they were allowed some leisure hours every day to earn something to pay their ransom. They were also allowed to choose their own master or induce someone to pay their ransom.

Sometimes the owner himself handed him over to some one for what he thought to be his ransom value. This led to the sale of war-prisoners which was afterwards abused. In one word, Islam put an end to all kinds of slavery, and introduced a new institution for prisoners of war and framed laws more generous and favourable to them than ever were met with under the international law of the present day. Muhammad had not treasures at his disposal for the emancipation of the slaves, but he appealed to the charitable nature of man and made the emancipation of slaves a great virtue and an act of very high merit in the eye of God, so much so, that he saw the expiation of many sins in the liberation of slaves from bondage. Thus, he worked out the salvation of slaves.

### MUHAMMAD.

One thing can be observed in regard to him. The more that his time is approximated to, the greater, broadly speaking, is the progress, in Islamic countries. It may be illustrated, as, the nearer one gets to a light, the more intense it is. In the Christian Church this is not the case, because their not following the teachings of Jesus, they had no light to give. Hence the schisms, wars, general corruption and rottenness which existed in every department of Christian activity, from the Popes down to the priests and the laity, for details of which, the student is referred to "History of Sacerdotal Celibacy" (Lea) and the "Popes and their Church" (MacCabe). But when the grip of the Church had loosened on the human intellect, at the Reformation, came intellectual freedom and emancipation, nourished and developed by

Islamic thought and influence. To particularize, we will briefly enumerate the state of, and progress in, Islamic countries while Christians were busily occupied in cutting each others throats etc.

Islam is a religion of Humanity, Toleration and Progress. The first step in the evolution of mankind is the freedom of the reason, the liberty of thought; without this, no advance can be made. Christian Europe was under the rule of the Papacy, by which all independent thinking was sternly prohibited and repressed. The first step of development must be from below, that is to say, from the individual, rather than the community. Hence rightness of action is imperative. Dealing first with woman; her position in the Church was not enviable. She had been charitably described by the Christian Fathers as "the gate of hell", and what is delightfully naive "a wicked work of nature, covered with a shining varnish" and "a desirable temptation." In pre-Islamic Arabia as well as in Europe, she had no status, no rights or privileges. Under Islam, she had equal rights with man, having her own property under Muslim law, whereas in England only quite recently has she had legal individual rights under the Married Women's Property Act. Slavery was practically universal and the position of the slaves was bad. They could not intermarry and had no shadow of any personal rights. In Europe it prevailed until the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in America until the Civil War in 1860. In Islam, there was virtual equality between the owner and his so-called slave. Slavery was, as shown before, mainly a name. Slaves under Islam are better placed than many free citizens in Europe. No Muslim

can actually be a slave. Now we emerge from the individual to the general and deal with things affecting the communities.

Law and order protect the new-born individual ideas and rights. In Islam, civil law was evolved and enforced, a law of procedure in war humanized it. Regulations in matters of hygiene were introduced, also in morality; asceticism, which is probably one of the greatest evils introduced by the Church, was prohibited. Briefly, a complete revolutionary spirit was introduced which went far on the road to real progress. A brotherhood was established, not like the dreamy utopia conceived of in the mind of the Church, but a real and a co-operative one. There were no privileged classes, spiritual or temporal to lord it over the community. The most remarkable proof and comparison showing the benefits of Islam, will be found in Spain. This country had been under Roman rule. A small minority of the nobles possessed nearly all its wealth; the agriculturist and serf were in a deplorable state; their only way of escape from tyranny was to take refuge in the forests and wilds and start brigandage—hence chaos. The Visigoths came and conquered—more chaos; to the accompaniment of pillage, battle and flame, the Visigoths fell under the power of the clergy, the result being utter and undiluted confusion. The Church perpetuated the evils of serfdom, alleging that it was ordained by nature. Complaints as to the condition of the country approximating to the domain ruled by the devil, drew forth the answer that it was because the Jews were not punished for the death of Jesus; this was followed by an outbreak of Jew-baiting. The Jews and many Christians escaped to

Morocco, then under Islam. Muslim armies were invited to invade Spain, which they conquered and succeeded in completely altering the condition of the people and the state of the country.

They set about a re-generation; firstly, formulating just laws which bettered the condition of the masses and then devoted their attention to scientific instruction in schools and universities. Agriculture, viticulture, sericulture and architecture were introduced, studied and developed, one happy result being the transformation of the fertile valleys of Andalusia into a garden. Attention was then paid to hygiene and sanitation, aqueducts and baths were constructed. Medicine and surgery were studied and practiced, whilst in many towns and cities, suitable hospitals were erected. Natural sciences, such as astronomy and geography together with navigation were taught. Abstract sciences and arts, mathematics, algebra, geometry, chemistry (which owes so many of its most important processes to the Arabs) were elaborated, botany, poetry, music, rhetoric, political economy, the fine arts, paper making and science and art in all their branches were taught at the Muslim universities of Cordova, Seville and Malaga and other cities. Libraries were established; there were 70 public ones in Spain, one royal library containing 600,000 volumes. All this culture, all this civilization was destroyed by the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, and the country is now an intellectual byword.

Spain was not the only country that had been blessed by the benefits of Muslim rule, Egypt, Persia, Turkestan, Afghanistan and India all benefited by them.

As an illustration of the general scope of Muslim

learning, apart from Moorish Spain, we quote the article: ——“A study in contrasts” printed in the Islamic Review of June 1917, which briefly epitomizes the above in an illuminating and instructive manner.

The Muslims have carried their culture and thought far and wide even in the present time, when African races owe so much to Islamic teaching and religion, lifting them up, as it does, from ignorance, superstition and barbarism into a sober, progressive, enterprising and independent people.

Muhammad's work was a series of revolutions, religious, civil and social, by which were sown the seeds of a new civilization.

In this connection I could not do better than to reproduce in these pages, a very beautiful and able article which appeared in the pages of the Islamic Review in the year 1918-1919.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE ADVENT OF ISLAM AND AFTER.

MUHAMMAD'S work was a series of revolutions, and I wish to deal very briefly with his achievements. He dealt a mortal blow at a degenerate order of things, and sowed the seeds of a new and wholesome civilization.

### THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION.

At the time of Muhammad there were many religions. In every one matter of some form or another was worshipped. Each religion was divided into sects which fought one another by mouth, pen, hand, and sword. Religion was thus a cause, not for peace and order but for war and anarchy. There was murdering; there was burning; there was brute force let loose everywhere.

Muhammad knew this state of affairs in Arabia and in Syria. He pondered over these matters, and came to the conclusion that the business of religion was not to destroy but to construct; not to divide but to unite; not to enslave but to emancipate; not to depress and demoralize but to cheer up and elevate. After years of contemplation he found that the best religion, to which all should flock, was that in which man worshipped one Supreme and Immaterial God, and practised His unchangeable laws. He it is who is behind the action that takes place when a seed of corn, plant, or tree is



sown, germinates, bursts forth, and gives man a food for the body and a delightful picture for the eye. He it is who is behind every action in this wonderful Universe. He is not the sun, moon, or stars. He is not tree, plant, or flower. He is not mountain, ocean, river, or any other inanimate matter. And lastly he is certainly not man. He is the all-pervading soul of Creation.

The Immortality of God is very important. He is everywhere, yet He cannot be seen. He is God of East and West; of black, yellow, and white races; of every atom anywhere; He is One and God of *all*. In His sight the best man is he who does most for the true happiness of humanity, be he black or white.

Such a religion naturally includes all humanity. Such a religion considers all former prophets of union, learning, and civilization as the common property of all mankind. And thus a united world should be the result.

This religion of humanity Muhammad did not call Muhammadanism, nor a person who professes it a Muhammadan. Muhammad was a man—a mortal. This religion is immortal. It is Islam. The one and only God existed from eternity. His laws are eternal. To adore Allah and to pursue his constant laws is Islam. And Muhammad was just like you and me—a Muslim.

Islam is a continuous constructive progress. A Muslim when he dies still progresses. He is a Muslim who incessantly seeks out the mysteries of Nature. He is a Muslim who continues to add to our knowledge of this Universe. This work should never cease until man ultimately attains the promised perfection. Then he will be at one with God. That is Islam.

## THE INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTION.

EMANCIPATION OF REASON: THE FIRST PRINCIPLE  
OF ISLAM.

The next problem which faced Muhammad was, What made people deteriorated and divided instead of progressive and united? He thought profoundly and found that the enslavement of Reason was at the bottom of every superstition, prejudice, and many other vices. Men do not exercise Reason; they follow blindly like sheep. Reason is the gift of God, Muhammad said. He is extremely grateful to God who uses it, and he is ungrateful who does not. To convince oneself of the truth of anything, even God, Reason must be employed. Muhammad is a prophet, not only because he told us so much but also because we understand and appreciate his marvellous work for humanity. By emancipating Reason Muhammad paved the way for the miracles that followed in learning, science, commerce, industry, and the mingling of humanity. Thus with Islam Rationalism came to the fore.

## THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

The social reforms effected by Muhammad had material and far-reaching results. His laws were not "scraps of paper." He had won the hearts of all his people, who were very zealous therefore to abide by every law that he enjoined.

The reforms were various and each would form a subject by itself, and therefore I can only mention them very briefly.

A.—*Woman.*

1. Polygamy was universal even in Christendom in spite of Justinian's edict. It was common for a man to marry\* any number of wives besides concubines. In Arabia woman was a mere chattel. When a husband died the son inherited, among other things, his father's wives and did exactly as he liked with them. He could marry one or more of them or take them as his concubines, or sell them, or make a present of them.

2. In Arabia daughters were buried alive; and every year in Egypt a young virgin was drowned in the Nile.

3. If a free woman married a slave she was killed.

4. There were many horrible practices which go to prove that woman was not thought of much account.

At that time Muhammad startled the world by declaring that "Paradise was under the feet of the mother"; that a Muslim should not speak evil of women; that in the sight of God man and woman were the same; that Islam bound man and woman by a spirit of union, love, and brotherhood; that education was obligatory on woman as well as man. And he assigned to woman her rights as daughter, wife, mother, and a member of society. The rights which these Muslim women had all these centuries ago have only lately been given to European women—for example, through the Married Women's Property Act in England. Under Islam in public life a woman was always equal to any man.

B.—*Slavery.*

Slavery was universal too. The strong enslaved the weak. The slave, badly fed, badly clothed, was tortured

or killed with impunity. Christianity did not better his condition. Rome legislated, but there were still the slaves. Slaves could not intermarry. If a slave married a free woman he was burned alive. We need not go far. The American system of slavery is still fresh in many minds. The new forms of the twentieth-century systems of slavery are too well known to need any allusion.

Islam in the seventh century of the Christian era declared the equality of humanity, and set forth a slave law which aimed at the ultimate abolition of this disgraceful institution. I give below some:—

1. A person who trades in human beings is an out-cast of humanity.
2. If a bondswoman bear a child she becomes emancipated and the child has the rights of a legitimate offspring.
3. No Muslim could be made a slave.
4. In lawful wars captives are conditional slaves, but they become free on embracing Islam or by ransom or emancipation.
5. A slave could marry the daughter of his master.
6. To free slaves is a most acceptable way of worshipping God.
7. One of the punishments inflicted by law was to free a slave of the person punished.
8. No distinction whatever to be made between slave and master in clothes and food.
9. A slave should not be given more work than he is able to do.
10. A slave should not be treated in any way with contempt because he is such.

11. One of the duties of the Muslim *Baitulmal* (House of Finance) was to free slaves by paying money to their masters.

12. In the contract made between slave and master, any violation of it on the part of the latter was to be used as far as possible for the freedom of the slave.

### C.—*Laws.*

#### 1. CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LAWS.

A Code of both laws was set up, but such general principles as the following were also laid down for guidance of future legislators:—

1. Only the learned who have distinguished themselves in the study of their subjects as well as human life shall draw up laws, not in the letter of old traditions but in the spirit of Islam to suit the new conditions. When they disagree the decision goes with the majority.

2. Moderation shall be a basis for all actions moral and material.

3. No harm done or suffered.

4. The spirit shall always have the pre-eminence over the letter of the law.

5. There shall be general equality under the law.

6. Evil shall be repelled in the best way.

#### 2. LAWS OF WAR.

In pre-Islamic days the conquerors were extremely barbarous in dealing with a conquered enemy. No law put any bounds on their violence. Thus the Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Persians practised the burning of the living and the mutilation of the slain as a matter of course.

The following quotations from the Bible vividly picture what used to take place:—

Numbers XXXI. 10: "And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire."

Numbers XXXI. 17: "Now therefore kill every male among the little ones."

Deuteronomy III. 6: "And we utterly destroyed the men, women, and children of every city."

Ezekiel IX. 6: Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women."

I Samuel XV. 3: "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Compare this with the following instructions of Muhammad to the leader of the Muslim expeditions:—

"In *avenging* the injuries inflicted upon us, molest not the harmless votaries of domestic seclusion; spare the weakness of the female sex; injure not the infant at the breast, or those who are ill on bed. Abstain from demolishing the dwellings of the unrésisting inhabitants; destroy not the means of their subsistence, nor their fruit trees."

Or with those of Abu Bakr, Muhammad's successor, to the Muslim armies:—

"Be sure you do not oppress your own people, nor make them uneasy, but advise with them in all your affairs, and take care to do that which is right and just, for those that do otherwise shall not prosper. When you meet your enemies, quit yourselves like men and do not turn your backs; and if you gain the victory, kill

no little children, nor old people, nor women. Destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill for the necessary purpose of subsistence. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious persons that live retired in monasteries, who propose to themselves to serve God that way. Let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries."

The Muslim generals scrupulously enforced these regulations on their soldiers. Amr-Ibn-Aas after entering Old Cairo declared the freedom and equality before the law of all Egyptians and instituted law-courts, order and justice and concerned himself with the well-being of the masses. When leaving Old Cairo for Alexandria he discovered that a pigeon had built her nest and laid her eggs on the top of his tent. He immediately abandoned the tent for her, giving strict orders that she was not to be interfered with or the tent removed until the young had already taken to flight.

At that time the Egyptians believed that the Nile would not rise unless a young virgin dressed as a bride were cast into it each year. When he heard of this practice, he wrote at once to the Khalifa, and on his instructions immediately prohibited the abominable custom.

### 3. HEALTH LAWS.

Muhammad knew the bad effect on humanity of alcohol, dirt, and unclean foods, and he therefore laid down laws enjoining daily ablutions; total immersion

and clean clothes at least once a week; total prohibition of alcohol and of foods proved by experience to be injurious to the health of the human being. "Eat and drink and do not make excess," is the Quranic injunction, which can always be followed with the best advantage.

#### 4. MORAL LAWS.

Certain duties were incumbent on every Muslim towards himself, his brother Muslims, humanity, and dumb animals.

Gambling was strictly forbidden. Justice, truth, subjugation of the passions, and other virtues were enjoined. Space will allow only three quotations from Muhammad:—

1. "Muslims are brothers in religion, and they must not oppress one another; nor abandon assisting one another; nor hold one another in contempt," etc.

2. "The best of men is he from whom good accrues to humanity."

3. "Fear God with regard to animals, ride them when they are fit to be ridden, and get off when they are tired. There are rewards for doing good to dumb animals."

Many immoralities were forbidden, such as the practice of going round the Ka'aba naked and in disorderly fashion.

#### D.—*Prohibition of Monasticism.*

Muhammad thought humanity to be neither all good nor all bad, but that through continuous progress perfection was possible of attainment. Progress was not practicable with monastic life. Evils can be gradually



eradicated only through intimate knowledge of the world and its ways. For this reason monasticism of any sort was prohibited in Islam.

E.—*Abolition of Poverty.*

One of the unique institutions of Islam is the Zakat or Abolition of Poverty. A tax of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. was deducted from every capital, above a certain value, which had been working for a whole year. This and other taxes were the foundation of the House of Finance. Both income and outgo had to be regulated, and thus originated the modern Budget. Before Islam monarchs extorted all the money they could from their unfortunate subjects and the conquered, and they squandered it on follies and vices of their own. Public interests were never considered except in so far as they coincided with those of the rulers. In Islam the Government became the servant of the people. The House of Finance was established to be the property of every Muslim. The Khalifa was allowed only such a sum as was sufficient to keep him and his family. The wealth that poured in was wisely spent on the public interests of Islam. Orphans, widows, and incapacitated were fed and clothed. This was not charity; it was their right as Muslims. They demanded it and they got it. Work of a constructive kind for the good of the community was obligatory on every Muslim, and he was given some when he had none. If a worthy Muslim had gone bankrupt through no fault of his own, his family did not apply for indoor or outdoor relief but for a right and it was at once given. The man asked for work and it was found for him, or he was helped in every

possible way to re-establish himself in his previous or other trade. Or suppose a part of the Islamic Empire was struck with famine, then the House of Finance had to step in and deal out the necessary help which was their right *as Muslims*. This institution will be appreciated by those who know the havoc wrought in the slums of Europe by poverty and all that it brings in its trail. Europe has seen its great processions of unemployed. They were not all won't-works, but those unfortunates who found no market whatsoever for their energies. Gaunt hunger was plainly marked on their faces and in their ragged clothes. Many spent their nights under the stars, snatching scanty moments of oblivion until the wary policeman disturbed them by his "Move on, there!" If you penetrate into the dark courts and alleys of the slums another phase of squalid poverty meets you. There is the abode of those poor workers who toil for a wage which barely keeps body and soul together. The streets are full of children whose only amusement is found in the gutter. Their state is perhaps the most pitiable of all, as their start in life is so heavily handicapped. Surrounded by unspeakable squalor and all its attendant evils, what chance do they stand of becoming respected citizens? I heard of a man in New York who each year when the nights began to get chilly committed some small crime in order to obtain warmth and food in prison during the winter months. Likewise some weeks ago an aged man of seventy-five said at Bow Street that he preferred prison with hard labour to the workhouse, wherein he had been for the past eight years. True civilization should not only provide work for all its people, but should deal ab-

ject poverty its mortal blow as Islam did in different ways.

### THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION.

The new Commonwealth that had its birth in Medina was a real democracy: man or woman, young or old, free-born or emancipated—all possessed equal rights under this True Republic, and all had duties to perform for the well-being of the whole.

The new Government took up the cudgels for the weak against the strong, for the poor against the rich, for democracy against autocracy. The weak now felt safe for the first time, knowing there was an effective power to protect them; the strong learned to be cautious, because they knew of the pains and penalties aggression brought on them.

The ruler at this time was not an absolute and hereditary monarch. The best man in the community was elected to rule in their interests and in the spirit of the Islamic Constitution. The second Khalifa, the great Omar, slept on the steps of the mosque. The Khalifa had no more personal part in the Treasury than any other citizen. His salary was fixed and could not be raised without the consent of the Muslims.

The taxes were definite and were collected and administered by the House of Finance. The office of this institution was unique. It supported widows, orphans, and incapacitated. It provided work for the unemployed. As long as this institution was in its original form it abolished poverty. And it belonged not to a class but to all Muslims alike.

This new brotherhood was real and co-operative:

there was no privileged classes, temporal or spiritual, to tyrannize over the people. How this must have struck strangers from other lands, especially conquered peoples under Roman rule, will be obvious from a brief description of Egypt in the East and Spain in the West. These strangers came to Medina and found such a condition of things unequalled anywhere. They did not lose time in requesting the Muslims to free their countrymen from the despots who ruled over them.

### SPAIN UNDER ROMAN AND VISIGOTH.

At the dawn of Islam, like other provinces of the Roman Empire, Spain had fallen on very bad times. The nobility were very few, but they possessed nearly all the wealth of the land. Waited on by countless slaves, they spent their lives in gambling, luxury, and every vice. Strange to say, they were exempt from paying taxes which burdened other classes. Various means of extortion were used to supply the voracious mouths of the Romans. If a taxpayer was insolvent his neighbour had to pay double.

The condition of any one who belonged to the agricultural middle class was deplorable. He had to bear the brunt of taxation. He could not sell his land without the consent of the Emperor at Rome. If driven by despair to flight in order to take a servile occupation, he was hunted down and forcibly reinstated.

More deplorable was the condition of the serf. He was inalienably bound to the land. He was sold with it. He had to work for his landowner and supply him with crops. To the Romans he paid a personal tax and he was liable to be commandeered by them at any time.

The slaves fared worse still. They were merely chattels of their masters. So numerous were they at all times that when it was once proposed in the Roman Senate to put them in uniform, the proposal was rejected on the plea that the uniform would make it too obvious to the slaves how vast their numbers were and how very few were those of their masters. One master, after heavy losses of slaves in battle, still owned more than four thousand. Another had eight thousand. These poor wretches were treated by their masters with the utmost brutality, their life and death being of no account.

A middle class man, serf, or slave had but one alternative to escape from tyranny. They fled to forests and lived the life of primitive man, or forming bands of brigands, they marauded periodically wherever they could. At one time they became so dangerous that an army had to be sent to fight them.

From the above it can be seen that for the masses it was a matter of complete indifference who ruled the country. This apathy facilitated the conquest of Spain by the Visigoths. These barbarians, although meeting with no opposition, burned churches and houses, massacred or enslaved man, woman, and child. The terror thus sent into the hearts of the people added to the number of brigands in the forests. However, in time the Visigoths settled as masters, but fell under the influence of the clergy, who thus rose to power.

When the Church was weak it was on the side of serf and slave and even preached their enfranchisement. But no sooner had she become powerful and possessed of large estates and palaces, with their complement of serfs and slaves, than she publicly declared that Nature

ordained certain beings to be slaves and others to be masters. When conditions became worse still and people complained that the rule of the clergy, instead of being an earthly Paradise, was a living hell, the Church answered that that was so because the Jews, the murderers of Christ, were still unpunished. And thus a wholesale persecution of these unfortunates ensued. Some Jews to escape death became Christians and even then were separated from their children, who were to be brought up as pure Christians. Others lost their property and liberty, and were handed over as slaves of their former Christian slaves.

North Africa was now under Muslim rule. Spanish Jews had seen with their own eyes the freedom and well-being of their co-religionists under Islamic government. The North African Jews in return for a small tax enjoyed rights and privileges which they never dreamt of under any other rule.

The Muslims of those days set an example of tolerance towards Christians and Jews unparalleled by any other religious community even during the so-called enlightened twentieth century. It is therefore not difficult to understand why some Spanish Christians and Jews fled to North Africa to ask the help of the "Saviours from Heaven" as the Muslims were then called.

### SPAIN UNDER THE MUSLIMS.

When Muslims advanced to emancipate the country everywhere in Spain the Church and the nobility formed armies and met the Muslims on the field of battle.

However, after a series of battles the country became a Muslim State.

The Muslim armies behaved very differently from former conquerors. They proclaimed the safety of life and property of all non-belligerents and the proclamation was carried out to the letter. Thus those Spaniards who did not take up arms lost absolutely nothing.

The reforms were at once set on foot. Judges, governors, tax-collectors of fixed, reasonable taxes, and other officials were chosen by the Spanish people from among themselves. Women, children, monks, and helpless were exempt from tax. Property became alienable. Tolerance and justice were observed wherever there was a Muslim. Even the priests who fought the Muslims were not discontented with their lot.

The defeated clergy and nobles fled north and abandoned their lands, which thus came under direct Muslim rule. These lands had their complements of serfs and slaves. Then started a turning-point in the lives of those who had been so long and so mercilessly oppressed. The Muslims considered both serfs and slaves as one class: agriculturists. They tilled the soil and gave only one-third of the crops to the Muslim State, which in return guaranteed law, order, and peace. At the same time there commenced a social democratic revolution. The power of the clergy and nobility was shattered and their abandoned estates were divided among the people. Thus peasant landowning was instituted.

Serfs and slaves under Christian masters had but to escape to a Muslim locality and embrace Islam to become free citizens, with full rights and privileges, of a

vast Muslim Empire. Multitudes of slaves were not slow to take full advantage of the new order, and thus a new freedom swept from East to West over countries which were once submerged in utter subjection.

### EGYPT UNDER BYZANTINE RULE.

Three hundred thousand Byzantines occupied and enslaved the country. The Egyptians had suffered from heavy taxation and cruel injustice. The judges, governors, and other officials of the Emperor were despots who ground the people down and made their lives intolerable. Justice was unobtainable and the Copts sank into abject misery.

The chaos was not only political and administrative but also social and religious. Like other parts of the Empire, religious faction was rampant. There were those hot disputes which led to bloodshed. One said that Christ had two natures and two wills. Another contended that the Nazarene had only one nature and one will. Still another disagreed with both. And so on. Ultimately the Emperor issued an Edict making it incumbent on Christians to believe in two natures and one will. Some accepted; others refused. The latter were subjected to terrible persecutions. Thus the famous Edict served to add fuel to fire.

### EGYPT UNDER THE MUSLIMS.

When the army of Amr Ibn El Aas reached Old Cairo the Roman Governor-General wished to negotiate with the Muslims. The Muslim General chose his delegates. One of their spokesmen was Ibada Ibn Essalt, a negro. When these presented themselves, the white



Byzantine was horrified to observe among them a black man. He therefore wished him to leave. But one white Muslim delegate retorted that Islam made all humanity equal, and as the negro was the wisest of their group therefore any negotiations would have to be made with him and with him alone. The Roman representative had to bow to the inevitable. Soon Roman power was shattered and the Muslim liberator at once started the usual reforms.

The Egyptians were allowed to believe and practise the creed they preferred. Judges, governors, and other officials were appointed by the people from the people. Safety of person and property was felt and realized by Egyptians of all classes. And the people enjoyed such peace and security as they had not known for generations.

Amr Ibn El Aas left no stone unturned to increase the welfare of the Egyptian. Justice was so well administered that self-respect became the rule. What a vast difference in the feelings of the conquered under Islam and under Byzantium! Once the son of the famous Muslim conqueror and benefactor of Egypt struck a Copt. Though it was not long ago that the Roman killed the Egyptians indiscriminately, but under Muslim rule the one-time slave felt aggrieved. He heard that at Medina there was an all-powerful righter of wrongs. And there he went. The matter was brought before Ibn Al Khattab, the Khalifa. Amr Ibn El Aas and his son were recalled from Egypt. They stood side by side with the Copt before the Khalifa at Medina. The Defender of the Faithful found the son guilty and accordingly meted out justice—the Muslims had to suffer

for the Copt! Not only that, but Amr Ibn El Aas himself was censured for allowing such a thing to happen. The Grand Khalifa addressed the General in these immortal words:—

“How dare anybody to enslave man who is born to be free!”

Another example of the deep meaning of equality between men in Islam is shown in the case of Jabala. Formerly a Christian king, he had embraced Islam. Dressed in silken robes, he was making the circuit of the Ka'aba when a poor Muslim accidentally trod on his train. The king struck him in the face. The poor man hurried to Medina and complained to the Khalifa, who made Jabala appear before him to answer the accusation. The king did not deny his action and added that but for the sacred vicinity of the Ka'aba he would have killed the pauper with the sword. He also said that by embracing Islam he thought he would be much greater, yet he was made to stand next to a beggar. The Khalifa replied that the only distinction between man and man in Islam was who was the better in his life and actions; and as Jabala was guilty he must settle it amicably with the offended Muslim or justice would take its course. The king asked for twenty-four hours' respite to consider the matter, and this was granted. Jabala, however, fled to Constantinople, became Christian again, and escaped justice at the hands of Ibn El Khattab.

“The political character of Islam,” says Syed Ameer Ali, “has been a subject of gross misrepresentation by the followers of the rival creeds. Politically Islam conferred more benefits on mankind in the few years which

its founder spent at Medina than centuries of vague theorizing by the followers of the Portico or the Academy, or by the hangers-on in the ante-rooms of the Jurisconsults of Rome. It gave a Code to the people and a Constitution to the State, enforced by the sanctions of religion. It limited taxation; it made men equal in the eye of the law; it consecrated the principles of self-government. It established a control over the sovereign power by rendering the executive authority subordinate to the law—a law based upon religious sanctions and moral obligations.

“A change came immediately over every country which the Muslims entered. Cities sprang into existence; order took the place of anarchy. The peasantry and petty landowners, trampled under foot by an insolent oligarchy, and regarded with contempt by the priesthood, hailed the Muslims as the forerunners of their salvation.

“Those countries where the Muslims established themselves remained exempt from the disastrous consequences of the feudal system and the feudal code. Admitting no privilege, no caste, their legislation produced two grand results—that of freeing the soil from factitious burdens imposed by barbarian laws, and of assuring to individuals perfect equality of rights.

“Nations which till then had slumbered wrapt in the apathy of wretchedness, woke into new life and new energy, under the auspices of the Prophet of Arabia. The people everywhere received the Muslims as their liberators. Wherever any resistance was offered, it was by the priesthood and the aristocracy.

“An examination of the condition of the Muslims

under the first four Caliphs brings to view a popular government based on a definite code, and administered by elective chiefs with limited powers. The chiefs of the State were controlled by public opinion, and were open to the censures of their meanest subjects. Othman was obliged to render every day an account of the public money; and Ali<sup>1</sup> appeared before the ordinary tribunals of justice an accuser of a Christian thief. The decisions of the judges were supreme; and the early Caliphs could not assume the power (as later usurpers did) of pardoning those whom the regular tribunals had condemned. The law was the same for the poor as for the rich; for the man in power as for the labourer in the field.

"The laws of the Muslims, based on equitable principles and remarkable for their simplicity and precision, did not demand an obedience either difficult to render or incompatible with the intelligence of mankind.

"'A happy mixture of simplicity and energy, of disinterestedness and good faith, of modesty and bravery, of piety, and of love for universal humanity, made the charm of the manners of the early Muslims.'<sup>2</sup> The sobriety of life imposed by the precepts of the Prophet preserved the general mass of Muslims from those wild outbursts which disgraced the lives of the followers of other religions; the sanctity of speech and the respect for law and property formed a safeguard to the world against oppression."

<sup>1</sup> Ali was the fourth Caliph.

<sup>2</sup> Oelsner.

## THE QUR-ÁN AND THE LANGUAGE REVOLUTION.

Islam means unity: unity in everything. Among other things, the Qur-án united the Arabian dialects into one.

The sound justice, freedom, and well-being of the liberated peoples under Islam attracted vast numbers of them to embrace the religion. The Qur-án thus became their book, and in less than two centuries its language became their own. In this way Arabic supplanted several languages and was spoken, written, and understood over a vast Empire extending from the Indus in the East to the South of France in the West.

"By the aid of the Qur-án," writes Deutsch, "the Arabs conquered a world greater than that of Alexander the Great, greater than that of Rome, and in as many tens of years as the latter had wanted hundreds to accomplish her conquests; by the aid of the Qur-án they alone of all the Shemites came to Europe as kings, whither the Phoenicians had come as tradesmen, and the Jews as fugitives or captives; came to Europe to hold up, together with these fugitives, the light to Humanity; they alone, while darkness lay around, to raise up the wisdom and knowledge of Hellas from the dead, to teach philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and the golden art of song to the *West as to the East*, to stand at the cradle of modern science, and to cause us late epigoni for ever to weep over the day when Grenada fell."

"It was the Qur-án," adds Syed Ameer Ali, "which fixed and preserved the Arabic language on a systematic foundation. Remarkable for the simple grandeur of its

diction, the chaste elegance of its style, the variety of its imageries, the rapid transitions, like flashes of lightning, which show the moralist teaching, the philosopher theosophizing, the injured patriot denouncing in fervid expressions the immorality and degeneration of his people, and withal the God of the Universe proclaiming through the man the fundamental truths which govern the moral world.

“Such is the Qur-án.”

### MUSLIM CIVILIZATION.

The Prophet of All Humanity laid the foundations of the Moslem Commonwealth. His four immediate successors were wonderful men who loathed ostentation of any kind. Outward shows of pompous humbug only impressed the masses that the rulers were a class high above them and therefore not easily accessible for justice.

The first four Caliphs ate and dressed like the simplest of their fellows, yet the respect they commanded was great and paramount. Ali, the fourth Khalifa, had a large income of his own. He spent it, not on himself or his family but on public good which benefited Christian and Jew as well as Muslim. Their point of view was that it was incumbent on a Muslim ruler in every way to think and work for the welfare of the whole; that there should be nothing on the part of the ruler which would prevent that mutual understanding and confidence between governor and governed.

The Romans had been long in occupation of Spain, France, England, and other countries of Europe. In the fifth century they had to retreat with their legions to

defend Rome against the attacking Huns. Centuries of Roman dominion left the peoples of the above countries just as barbarous as when the Romans first set foot on their lands or perhaps worse. But after three centuries of Muslim occupation of Spain, South France, and South of Italy, the germ of progress was hard at work in many parts of Europe. It worked hardest in areas nearest to Muslim civilization, such as Spain, France, and Italy. It was from here that a new life dawned upon all Europe and led to the modern advancements. The few facts given under will show how millions of slaves were transformed into free und progressive peoples.

### THE KHALIFAS.

The Khilafat was an elective republican presidency. It was a form of government unsurpassed in these days. Muawiyah turned it into an hereditary monarchy at the expense of great Islamic principles and thus dealt a deadly blow at Islam.

With the monarchy came pomp and circumstance, luxury and pleasure. The House of Finance from being the property of all Islam became the privy purse of the monarch. Extravagant living began to be the fashion. From small salaries sufficient for the official's needs, large sums were gradually paid until during the Mamun's Caliphate the Governor-General of the Eastern Provinces used to receive £120,000 per annum. The Fatimide Prime Minister at Cairo cost £40,000 a year. The Fatimide kings themselves had their own factories for making costly clothes which were distributed in summer and in winter as presents to officials of the Egyptian State. On this alone £250,000 was spent annually.

In Muslim Spain alone £8,000,000 worth of coins was minted yearly in the fourth century of the Hegira.

### SOME DEPARTMENTS OF STATE.

#### *Army Department.*

Muslim armies always camped well away from towns. On the site of those camps famous cities sprang up, such as Cairo, Koofa, Basra, and many others.

Muslim soldiers were registered in the Army books. Minute details of every soldier's distinguishing features were recorded.

Inspections and reviews took place periodically; those soldiers who in any way neglected their horses were dismissed or severely dealt with according to the degree of negligence.

#### *Navy Department.*

Moslem Spain possessed two hundred men-of-war. The Fatimides had a fleet of six hundred. There were special seaports given over to shipbuilding. The yards were called Darassinaa. The head of the Navy was the Ameer-ul-Bahr. Awakening Europe in imitating the Muslims turned Dar-assinaa into Arsenal, and Ameer-ul-Bahr into Admiral.

These fleets were used for defence, as the history of Abdul Rahman III of Spain clearly shows.

#### *The "Bareed" Department.*

The Budget of this department used to amount in some States of the Empire to £64,000. It was an important Administration and required numerous officials. Its business was to look after the highways, keeping



them in good repair and free from highwaymen. It also used to act as the modern post office. In this capacity it had posting houses which were well supplied with strong, healthy pack animals.

*Judicial Department.*

The early Moslem judges left a brilliant record behind them. Some had sentenced even offending monarchs. They wore a distinguishing uniform, and the salary of each Chief Justice was £1,000 a year besides gifts from the monarch. Diwan-ul-Mazalem or Dar-ul-Adl was the High Court of Appeal and was often presided over by the Khalifa.

*The "Shorta" Department.*

This did the work of our modern police.

*The "Hisba" Department*

This fixed the prices of the necessities of life, stopped profiteering, the use of fraudulent weights and measures, or sale of bad food. It performed the office of a Board of Health. It guarded against the overloading and ill-treatment of pack animals. And last, but not least, it prevented cruelty to children in schools.

*The "Insha" Department.*

This was the publicity department. At first skins and papyri were used, but later on the Moslems brought the art of paper-making from China. They set up paper mills in different parts of the Empire, and soon it became a fine art. The Moslems of Europe were not backward to follow suit. When they were turned out

of Europe they left, among many things, their paper mills which the rest of the continent copied.

### THE MUSLIM EMPIRE.

The area of the Muslim Empire was about 3,500,000 square miles with a population of nearly 250 millions.

The early Abbaside Caliphs established justice, peace, and security. They encouraged agriculture, manufacture, mining, and trade. Industries flourished at the same time from the borders of China to the northern confines of Spain: a state which history did not know before. Goods of all kinds traversed sea and land: from Pacific to Atlantic. Commerce was never so world-wide; never so active; never so tremendous. Several countries, several nations, several races, several languages—all mingled together and formed one people with one language, one culture, one interest, and one religion! That was a great marvel! Take a map of the world and look carefully at Medina. Then watch the light that emanated from there grow. Watch the heterogeneous become homogeneous. That was glorious. That was the miracle of Islam!

The Muslim Empire was not only the granary but also the manufacturing and mining district of the world. It is no wonder therefore that those times were marked by fabulous wealth.

### INCOME OF THE CALIPH.

Spain became an independent Muslim State during the Abbasides, but the rest of the Muslim Empire was under Baghdad. The States collected their revenues from taxes. After deducting the total amount of ex-

penditure on State and public works the remainder was sent to the Caliph. At the height of Muslim civilization the Caliph used to receive in this way a net income of sixteen million pounds. Of this he spent two millions on the government at the capital. A large part of the surplus was employed to advance literature, science, and learning; to found scientific and educational establishments. Gifts, sometimes amounting to £4,000 or more, were given to the various scholars.

On the death of Mansour, the Abbaside Caliph, thirty-two million pounds were found in his coffers, while in those of Haroun Al Rasheed thirty-six millions were discovered. It should not be overlooked that the purchasing power of money then was at least five times that of to-day.

### WEALTH OF MUSLIM WOMEN.

Very often the Muslim woman, as mother, wife, sister, or daughter of a Caliph, wielded immense power in State matters. Some had large estates and possessions. The income of Khaizooran, mother of Haroun Al Rasheed, was six million pounds a year. Her great versatility, learning, and munificence made her famous throughout Islam. There were many others. The mother of Moosta'een was extremely wealthy. She had a carpet worth five million pounds. It was embroidered with animals and birds made of gold with jewelled eyes.

Many women patronized savants and poets by gifts of money and precious stones. One distinguished poet received from a lady a present worth over £10,000.

## POETS AND ORATORS.

Poets and orators held a powerful influence over the public like that of the newspapers in our time.

## SCIENCE AND LEARNING.

Islam annulled fortune-telling, magic, and many other obsessions which were predominant at the time of Muhammad. Reason and natural laws replaced them in ruling life. Islam eradicated the idea of a person being entitled to recognition, respect, or superiority merely because he came from an aristocratic family or a so-called noble race. The individual was to be estimated by how he conducted himself, by his knowledge and usefulness.

The early Muslim listened to the recitation of the Qur-án and was moved by it to learn to read and write in order to know it himself. The study of the Qur-án led to the foundation of an elaborate and scientific Arabic grammar and rhetoric, to philology and other branches of the language; to research in ancient history and record of passing events, and to the writing of erudite treatises on law. It also resulted in a strong desire being created to learn all that can be known about Nature and its laws. Muslim messengers were sent to ransack India, Persia, and Greece for hidden treasures of knowledge. Fabulous sums were paid for works which had been concealed for ages from the world. All this wisdom was translated into Arabic and compared with the natural facts observed, then revised, and at last brought from chaos into a system. In this way logic was made a science; philosophy diligently studied and explained; modern chemistry established;

political economy and sociology discovered; geography, geology, botany, zoology, medicine, agriculture, astronomy, and other subjects were dealt with: each separately in learned treatises.

These unprecedented, world-wide efforts need not surprise us. Muhammad created an insatiable thirst for knowledge by many of his sayings—such as: “A Muslim should traverse mount and valley even unto China to acquire knowledge; the difficulties met with, however arduous, are one great way of worshipping God.” “Preserve knowledge to posterity by writing it.” “It is the business of every Muslim to discover wisdom from whatever source.” “It is obligatory on every Muslim, male or female, to acquire knowledge.” “A Muslim should study from cradle to grave.” “A Muslim should learn from the wise of any religion.” Such sayings were the seed which the Qur-án brought to fruition.

### HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY.

Several thousand books on history were written, differing in magnitude from one volume to eighty. They dealt with nations and empires, with persons and towns. The Muslims were the first to teach the world the art of making encyclopædias and dictionaries, linguistic and biographical.

For geography they sailed the oceans and traversed the land. They described phenomena of sea and land and everything else they saw. Races and men, kings and governments, religions and creeds, habits and customs, animals and insects, mountains and valleys, rivers and canals, forests and plains, fertility and aridity, fields and orchards, crops and productions, roads and routes,

villages and towns—all portrayed more or less in detail from Japan to England. The Arabic language can boast of many immortal works on geography. The sphericity of the globe was held throughout when its flatness was asserted by the scientists of priest-ridden Europe. The earth's circumference was calculated and proved to be 24,000 miles. Other geographical facts were revealed, while discoveries were made in East and West: America did not escape the notice of those Muslims.

#### POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SOCIOLOGY.

These sciences were unknown until the Muslims brought them to light. Political economy was known as "Management of Capital" and "Civil Politics." Sociology was called the "Science of Society."

#### MEDICINE AND PHARMACEUTICS.

Doctors as well as chemists had to pass an examination in order to obtain a licence to practise their profession. In Baghdad there were 860 doctors of different classes. Each class made one branch of medicine a special study. There were surgeons, opticians, dentists, specialists in the diseases of women, and so on.

The Muslim doctors through practice and experiment arrived at advanced ideas which gave ancient medicine its death-blow. They upheld that many diseases caused by unsatisfactory diet could be eradicated by the use of cooling vegetables, herbs, and plants. They were the first to use anæsthetics and describe diseases heretofore misunderstood and prescribe their cure.

Modern pharmacy is an institution of their invention. They studied the effect on the body of drugs from

many parts of the earth and discovered many new remedies.

### CHEMISTRY AND BOTANY.

Modern chemistry was founded by the Muslims. Nitric acid, sulphuric acid, silver nitrate, and many other compounds were first discovered by Muslim chemists. A Muslim historian said that when wood was painted by a certain compound, made by those chemists, it became fireproof. They were the first to teach the world distillation, filtration, crystallization, solutions, etc. They showed in treatises the worthlessness of ancient chemistry.

Botanical students, accompanied by artists, travelled far and wide to study the different vegetation and describe it minutely by pen and brush; ultimately these researches were recorded in scientific botanical treatises.

### HOSPITALS.

Hospitals were founded in large towns from the Indus to the north of Spain. These hospitals were well arranged and all classes of people were admitted to them. There were separate wards for each disease. The head doctor, accompanied by assistants, made daily visits to his wards to examine the patients and prescribe their treatment. Here also were departments for the study of medicine and pharmacy. Staffs of doctors and chemists accompanied armies in the field with hospital equipment on camels.

### ASTRONOMY.

Wonderful discoveries concerning the movement of the sun and other astral bodies were made. The size of

the earth, the obliquity of the ecliptic, the variation in the lunar latitudes, the precession of the equinoxes were ascertained. The astronomical tables of Albani were translated into Latin and were the base of astronomical study in Europe for centuries.

As they had done with ancient chemistry, the Muslims were the first to show the falsehood of astrology and set out in treatises based on observation and experience the facts and usefulness of astronomy. For this purpose many observatories were established all over the wide Empire. Many instruments were invented, such as the telescope and others.

### MATHEMATICS.

The Arabic figures as well as algebra are too well known to need any comment. Geometry and other mathematical branches were zealously studied and improved.

### FINE ARTS.

The fine arts were not neglected. Music was made a science and universally practised. Musical instruments were invented. Animal sculpture and painting were developed to a high degree of excellence, while Arabic architecture is world famous.

### EDUCATION.

No town, however small, was without colleges or schools, while the principal cities of the Empire had their separate universities.

High and low, rich and poor, all were absorbed in one intellectual pursuit or another. One writer left 400 works, another 600, others 231, and so on.



## LIBRARIES.

One library contained 3,000,000 volumes, another 1,000,000, a third 400,000. The number of libraries was very great. There were numerous public and private libraries.

Kings, princes, industrial magnates, and persons of wealth—all vied to surpass one another in the intellectual field.

Schools, colleges, and universities had their income from the rich gifts of the wealthy. Students and scholars were provided with free food, clothes, and habitation.

All that gigantic movement in government, industry, science, literature, and commerce was going at full speed in the tenth century from the borders of China to the borders of France. How Europe was infected, how it became at last aware of the new life that was stealing into the various parts of the Continent—is a story that requires to be told at some length, but which can now be easily imagined.

## RECAPITULATION.

And now let Syed Ameer Ali close:

"Such were the glorious achievements of the Muslims in the field of intellect: and all arose directly from the teachings of one persecuted man, flying from the sanguinary attacks of remorseless enemies.<sup>1</sup> Called by his voice from the abyss of barbarism and ignorance in which they had hitherto dwelt, with little hope of the present, with none of the future—they went out into the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. M. de Slane's *Introd.* to his translation of *Ibu-Khallikan*, p. 6.

world, not to slaughter like the Israelites of old, but to teach and elevate, to civilize and refine. Afflicted and down-trodden humanity awoke to new life. Whilst the barbarians of Europe, who had overturned an effete empire, were groping in the darkness of absolute ignorance and brutality,<sup>1</sup> the Muslims were occupied in the task of civilization. During centuries of moral and intellectual desolation in Christian Europe, Islam led the vanguard of intellectual progress. In an Indian story<sup>2</sup> we read of a land enshrouded in darkness, to which the demons of the air bar all access. It is not a fanciful land. Christianity had established itself on the throne of the Cæsars, but it had utterly failed in the object of regenerating the nations of the earth. From the fourth century of the Christian era to the twelfth century the darkness of Europe grew deeper and deeper. During these ages of ignorance Ecclesiasticism barred every access through which the light of knowledge, represented latterly by Muslim civilization, could stream in. But though jealously shut out from this land of fanaticism, the benignant influences of Islam in time made themselves felt in every part. From the court of the Norman princes of Sicily; from that of the great Frederick II; from sunny Andalusia; from the dark palaces of the Isaurian sovereigns of Constantinople,<sup>3</sup> Islam spoke to the benighted inhabitants of Europe. The wars of the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Draper, "Hist. of the Intellectual Development of Europe," vol. II. p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> The Fasâne-ajâyeb.

<sup>3</sup> For the Islamic proclivities of the Isaurian sovereigns, comp. Draper, "Hist. of the Intellectual Development of Europe," vol. I. p. 409.

Guelfs and Ghibellines; the contests of the Iconoclasts of Byzantium with orthodoxy, partially represented the grand battle of Rationalism with Patristicism, of Muslim civilization with Barbarism, of Islam with Ecclesiasticism. From the schools of Salerno, of Baghdad, of Damascus, of Granada, of Cordova, of Malaga, the Muslims taught the world the gentle instructions of philosophy and the practical teachings of stern science. Popes came to their universities to listen to the sweet accents of learning.

"The first outburst of Rationalism in the West occurred in the province most amenable to the power of Muslim civilization. Ecclesiasticism crushed this fair flower with fire and with sword, and threw back the progress of the world for centuries. But the principles of the Liberty of Thought, so strongly impressed on Islam, had communicated their vitality to Christian Europe. Abelard, the impulsive lover of Heloise, had felt the power of the genius of Averroes, which was shedding its light over the whole of the Western world. Abelard struck a blow for Free-thought, which his successors were not loath to follow up. Avenpace and Averroes were the precursors of Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke.<sup>1</sup>

"The influence of Abelard and of his school soon made itself felt in England. Wickliffe's originality of thought and freedom of spirit took their rise from the bold conceptions of the former thinkers. The later German reformers, deriving their notions on one side from the iconoclastic advocates of Constantinople, and on the other side from the movements of the Albigenses

<sup>1</sup> To those who may doubt the accuracy of my statement, I commend the words of M. Gobineau, p. 26.

—the Wickliffites, and even from the Guelfs—pre-eminently represented the Islamic ideas, only in a Teutonic garb. Luther, in whom, as Hallam justly thinks, there existed a vein of insanity,<sup>1</sup> tried to repudiate all obligation to Islam, by using harsh epithets with regard to Muhammad, in his translation of the Qur-án. But can any one doubt that he was influenced by it? Melancthon and the other German reformers were all deeply read in Muhammad's teachings.

"To come again to the point whence we started: while Christian Europe had placed learning under the ban of persecution; while the Vicar of Christ set the example of stifling the infant lisplings of Free-thought; while the priests led the way in consigning to the flames myriads of inoffensive beings for mere aberration of reason or simple differences of opinion regarding the nature of some bread and wine; while Christian Europe was exorcising demons and apotheosizing and worshipping rags and bones, learning flourished under the Muslim sovereigns—and was held in honour and veneration as never of old. The Vicegerents of Muhammad allied themselves to the cause of civilization, and assisted in the growth of Free-thought and Free-inquiry—originated and consecrated by the Prophet himself.<sup>2</sup> Persecution

<sup>1</sup> Hallam, "Constitutional History of England," chap. II. p. 56, note.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Gobineau, p. 26. Two of the most famous traditional sayings of Muhammad are worthy of being emblazoned in letters of gold, and adopted as the motto of the world of intellect: "The ink of the scholar," he would repeatedly impress upon his followers, "is more sacred than the blood of the martyr." Once while dilating upon the sanctity of Reason, he said: "It is related that God created Reason, and it was the most beautiful being in His Crea-

for the sake of faith was unknown; and whatever the political conduct of the sovereigns, the world has never had superior examples, in their impartiality and absolute toleration of all creeds and religions. The cultivation of the physical sciences—that great index to the intellectual liberty of a nation—formed the day-dream of the whole life of the Muslims.

“Three great evils have befallen the human race; three great disasters, which have materially retarded the progress of the world, and put back the hour-hand of time for centuries. The first is the failure of the Persians in Greece; the second is the unsuccessful siege of Constantinople by the Saracens under Muslemah in the eighth century; and the third is the unfortunate result of the battle of Tours between the Muslims under Abdur Rahâm Fehrî, and the wild hordes of Charles, Duke of Aquitaine, surnamed by the Christians, Martel. Each of these events has prevented either the growth or progress of civilization. If the Persians had succeeded in bringing Greece within the circle of their dominion, the influence of Hellenic genius would have been far greater, and would have extended over a wider area than was possible under the factious jealousies of petty states, many of them smaller than the smallest municipality in India or England. The Persians under the Kyanian (Achæmenian) sovereign carried on their war with a

tion—and God said to it, ‘I have not created anything better or more perfect or more beautiful than thou, blessings will come down on mankind on thy account, and they will be judged according as to the use they make of thee.’” The *Kitab-ul Mustatrîf*, chap. 11; also given in the *Mishkat*, Bk. XXII. chap. 18, pt. 3 (from Abu Hurairah).

far-seeing policy. They always allowed the states which became subject to them to retain a certain degree of independence and autonomy. The principles on which they proceeded arose not from a desire of rapine and conquest, but rather from a well-devised policy of federation.<sup>1</sup> Had Persia succeeded in amalgamating Greece with herself, the result only partially attained by the Hellenic upheaving under Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedonia, would have been attained centuries earlier.<sup>2</sup>

"So the two failures of the Muslims, one before Constantinople and the other in France, retarded the progress of the world for ages. Had the Arabs been less remiss at Tours, had they succeeded in driving before them the barbarian hosts of a barbarian chief, whom the ecclesiastics themselves afterwards condemned to everlasting perdition, the history of the darkest period in the annals of the world would never have been written. The Renaissance, Civilization, the growth of intellectual liberty would have been accelerated by seven hundred years. We should not have had to shudder over the massacre of the Albigenses, which a Pope instigated; nor of the Huguenots, for which a Pope returned thanks. We should not have had to mourn over the fate of a Bruno or of a Servetus, murdered by

<sup>1</sup> Comp. throughout Draper, "Hist. of the Intellectual Development of Europe," vol. I. pp. 125, 127.

<sup>2</sup> In justice to the Greeks we must admit that their greatest men were well aware of this. Pausanias and Themistocles have been handed down to posterity as traitors, but really they were the best friends of Greece. Had they succeeded in joining Greece and Persia, Europe and Asia would not have been so divided. Comp. Grote, vol. VI. p. 134.

the hands of those who had revolted from their mother-church. The history of the *auto-da-fés*, of the murders of the Inquisition, of the massacres of the poor Aztecs and Incas, the tale of the Thirty Years' War, with its manifold miseries—all this would have remained untold. Above all Spain, at one time the favoured haunt of learning and arts, would not have become the intellectual desert it now is, bereft of the glories of centuries. Who has not mourned over the fate of that glorious race, which the mad bigotry of a despot of the Escorial exiled from the country of its adoption, which had made it famous among the nations? Justly has it been said, 'In an ill-omened hour the cross supplanted the crescent on the towers of Granada.' The shades of the glorious dead, of Averroes and Avenpace, of Valadeta and Ayesha,<sup>1</sup> sit weeping by the ruined haunts of their people—haunts silent now to the voice of minstrelsy, of chivalry, of learning, and of art—only echoing at times the mad outcries of religious combatants, at times the fierce sounds of political animosities. Christianity drove the descendants of these Muslim Andalusians into the desert, sucked out every element of vitality from beautiful Spain, and made it a synonym for intellectual and moral desolation.

If Muslemah had succeeded in capturing Constantinople, the capital of Irene, the warm advocate of orthodoxy and cruel murderess of her own son, the dark deeds which sully the annals of the Isaurians, the Commeni, the Palæology, the terrible results which attended the seizure of Byzantium by the Latins, above all, the frightful outburst of the unholy wars in which

<sup>1</sup> Two princesses of the Umayyad house of Cordova.

Christian Europe tried to strangle the nations of Asia, would probably never have come to pass. But one thing is certain, that if Constantinople had fallen into the hands of the Muslims the iconoclastic movement would not have proved altogether abortive; and the reformation of the Christian Church would have been accomplished centuries earlier. To use an oft-repeated expression, Providence willed otherwise. The wave of Free-thought which had reached the Isaurian emperors from the Islamic regions broke upon the rocks of ignorance, superstition, and bigotry; its power was not felt until the combined action of the schools of Salerno and Cordova—the influence of Averroes, and perhaps of some Greeks who had imbibed learning at the Saracenic fountain-head—had broken down the rampart of Ecclesiasticism.

“Islam thus introduced into the modern world civilization, philosophy, the arts and the sciences, everything that ennobles the heart and elevates the mind. It inaugurated the reign of intellectual liberty.

“It has been justly remarked that as long as Islam retained its pristine character it proved itself the warm protector and promoter of knowledge and civilization—the zealous ally of intellectual freedom. The moment extraneous elements attached themselves to it, it lagged behind in the race of progress.

“Let us hope that the time is approaching when Islam, freed from the blind idolatry of letters and apotheosis of dead men, will regain her true character and, joining hands with the Christianity of the devoted Prophet of Nazareth, will march on together in the work of civilization. Islam and Christianity both aim at the



same results—the elevation of mankind. The gain of the one is the gain of the other. Why, then, should the two be hostile to each other? Why should not the two harmonize? Islam has done no evil to the world, nor has Christianity. Both have conferred the greatest benefits on mankind. Why then should not the two, mixing the waters of life treasured in their bosom, form the bright flowing river which would bear our own race to the most glorious fields of humanity? Everything that elevates the heart of man is true; everything that leads to goodness and purity in action and in thought is true. Why not then henceforth adopt the words of the Prophet of Arabia as the motto of humanity:—

“‘Try to excel in good works; when you shall return unto God, He will tell you as to that in which you have differed.’”

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE  
PROPHET.*The Childhood and Early Life of Muhammad.*

Muhammad belonged to the most noble family of the Quraish, the hereditary guardians of the Ka'aba (the sacred Shrine of Mecca) in the south-eastern corner of which is set the "Hajar al aswad"—the most sacred monument of Islam.

Abdulla, his Father, was the favourite son of Abdul Muttalib of the family of Hashim, and was married to Amina, a Lady of the Quraish: but their married life was of short duration for Abdulla contracted some disease whilst with the yearly caravan journey from Gaza and died during the return journey, leaving his young widow in somewhat poor circumstances.

Muhammad was born in the Autumn of 570 A.D. only a few months after his Father's death. It was the custom of the Quraish to place their young children out to nurse among the tribes around Mecca in order that they might benefit by the fresh mountain air and acquire, from the earliest years, a good knowledge of the Arabic language which was spoken in its purest form in those districts. In accordance with this custom he was entrusted to a reliable lady named Halima, a Bedouin nurse, in whose care he remained till he was two years of age. He was then returned to Mecca but,

owing to the breaking out of an epidemic and the solicitude of his Mother who naturally felt anxious about his health and wished him kept clear of all chances of infection or contagion, he was sent back to the hills with Halima where he remained till he was six years old, when he finally returned to Mecca.

In the following year his Mother died and he was left an orphan under the care of his paternal grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, with whom he spent two very happy years at the end of which time there was another sad change for his Grandfather died and, at eight years of age, he came under the protecting care of his Uncle, Abu Talib. From the very cradle he showed signs of gifts and coming spiritual powers and there were not wanting indications of those moral qualities which were to equip him for his Mission. There have not come down to us many authenticated details of the facts which prompted men of his time to accord to him virtue and affection but it is known that both his Grandfather and Uncle regarded him with the deepest affection and placed unlimited confidence in him.

Whilst Muhammad was under the care of Abu Talib, who by reason of his commercial business had to make frequent visit to distant lands, he had opportunities of meeting many people of importance who were to be of service to him in later years. On one occasion it is related that he said to his Uncle who was just starting on a business expedition to Syria:—"O my Uncle, do take me with you." The request was granted because the Uncle was devotedly attached to the little orphan and could not bear to be parted from him. So they set off together and this early visit, in his twelfth year

brought him into contact with Christianity and Christian ideas, Khadeeja also sent him on a commercial expedition to Syria and Damascus.

Respecting his life, whilst under the care of Abu Talib, the facts show that he must have possessed an excellent disposition as well as great charm of manner for he undoubtedly attracted the good will and regard of all he had dealings with—even when he was but a child of tender years. These beautiful qualities grew with him and the contemplation of the opening out of his blameless life, unsullied by the temptations and wickedness with which he was later on surrounded, fills one with reverence and admiration. Allah had blessed him and, under the cover of the Almighty Wings, he gave the great confirming instructions and Warnings to the Nations of the whole World. He was enabled by God's almighty power to confirm the teachings of former Prophets and emphasize the Unity of God with a power never previously granted to Divinely inspired human agency.

*His Early Aversion to Idolatry.* Whilst accompanying Abu Talib, the caravan stopped at Busra, an important town in Syria, where there was a famous Christian Convent under the charge of the Pontiff Bohera whose guests Abu Talib and Muhammad became.

On a certain occasion Abu Talib was speaking of the idols Laat and Hubul, suggesting their superiority to the Christian Deity, Muhammad heard all in silence but his face showed signs of suppressed anger. Finally he burst into tears and said that he did not know how to express his hatred of the two idols which were the

objects of worship by his countrymen. For one brought up by and belonging to the family of the hereditary guardians of the Great Shrine, to express hatred of the family gods was little short of astounding and could hardly have taken place had he not been conscious of his coming mission.

It has been asserted by certain Christian writers that Muhammad worshipped idols in his boyhood and youth and early manhood, but such a statement is absolutely incorrect and cannot be supported by any evidence. The incident recorded above occurred when he was in Syria when he was a little boy of ten or eleven and seems sufficient to refute any suggestion of idol worship: beside which there are many other instances related by his Uncle Abu Talib when he evinced the strongest abhorrence of idol-worship. Furthermore Abu Talib told his brother Abbas that he had never found Muhammad tell a lie nor had he ever observed in him any tendency to flippancy or idleness.

All traditions agree that he was thoughtful and serious and that the games and amusements of boyhood had not much attraction for him. His cleanliness and neatness were very early shown for, whilst his little cousins, Abu Talib's children, came out in the morning in dirty or untidy clothes, Muhammad was always both clean and tidy. The peaceful side of his nature kept him from joining in disputes and quarrels—he seemed to be always serene and tranquil, as though taking no real interest in such trifling things. This excellent disposition led to his being taken into the society of his elders and he did not mix with the other children at meals.

He was not a greedy boy and was rarely known to ask for food or drink and there is rather a pretty story told of his modesty when he was helping in the repair of the Ka'aba. The Quraish community was carrying the stones for the repair of the Sacred Shrine, all were helping, and it was not considered indecent for a child to walk naked, but the little Muhammad always wore a loin cloth just like a man. His Uncle Abbas fearing that the heavy stones might bruise him, said:—"If you will take off that cloth I will put it on your shoulder to prevent the stones from hurting your skin" and with these words he snatched the cloth from his little nephew who was so shocked that he almost fainted and was never seen naked again.

It is important to note that in his earlier life his candour, truth, and sincerity earned for him the title of "El Amin"—*the Trusty*, and this happy appellation stuck to him throughout the whole of his life. Indeed his truthfulness and wisdom were so remarkable that he was consulted on matters of dispute amongst the Arabs—known to be one of the most passionate and hot tempered races on earth: his wise decisions often turned aside wrath and prevented trouble and bloodshed.

In this respect there is one very noteworthy incident which deserves to be specially recorded. When the Ka'aba had been destroyed by fire and was being rebuilt, there was a dispute as to who should have the privilege of replacing the Black Stone in its position. The immemorial antiquity of the Stone and its peculiar sanctity, long before Islam was established rendered the work of replacing it in position a particularly im-

portant one. Clans and families disputed as to who should undertake the honoured task; controversy ran high and it was at last agreed that the first arrival on the following morning should be appointed arbiter and settle the question definitely. Muhammad was first on the scene on that eventful morning and was at once appealed to for his decision. He was not long in making up his mind and what he did was worthy of the future maker of wise laws. He spread his cloak on the ground and, placing the Stone upon it, asked the heads of the clans and families each to take a part in lifting it into position. Everyone was pleased and the simple expedient averted bloodshed and strife and a state of affairs which might easily have degenerated into a fierce and protracted tribal war.

In his twentieth year he was present with his Uncles at many of the sacrilegious battles which broke out at that time and in the following years he tended sheep and goats on the hills surrounding Mecca and it is probable that this quiet life tended to mould the growing meditative side of his nature and to prepare him for his mission.

*His Marriage.* By the time he had reached the age of 25 Muhammad's sterling qualities and love of truth had made him respected far and wide. Khadeeja, a wealthy lady of the Quraish and a distant kinswoman, deputed him to act as her agent. The appointment was made on the recommendation of Abu Talib who was aware of his capabilities in commercial affairs as well as his probity. For this Lady he undertook charge of a trade caravan bound for Syria on two different occasions; he was completely successful and managed the business

affairs with great skill and ability—indeed the successes gained fully confirmed the statements which had been made concerning him. His character and disposition no doubt attracted Khadeeja's admiration and his commercial success had won her gratitude; so that it was not at all surprising that they had a strong mutual regard for one another which ultimately culminated in marriage though she was very much his senior. This marriage, which was a very happy one, placed him above any uncertainty as regards financial matters. Many rich men had sought her hand but she had refused them all, preferring the man of all others who had won her respect and love by his beautiful character and wonderful qualities.

This marriage placed Muhammad in the forefront of the commercial and social life of Mecca; up to that time his life had been one of meditation and communion with Nature in a broad and general sense, but after his marriage with Khadeeja he was able to devote a greater portion of his time to that meditation for which he was naturally adapted, it is true he continued his commercial work but he found leisure for the contemplation of the stupendous duties which would devolve upon him before the journey of life terminated. He contrasted in his mind the polytheistic creed of Mecca and compared it with the more refined faith of the Jews and Christians and he very clearly perceived the need of reforms of the most drastic nature.

All chroniclers are agreed that he made a most ideal husband to the wife he so dearly loved and that his home life was above reproach; his marriage with Khadeeja in his 25<sup>th</sup> year was indeed a union of hearts as



well as of hands and for twenty-seven years nothing disturbed the harmony of their married life; his affection was unswerving and loyal; during her lifetime he contracted no other alliance and death alone brought about that cherished memory which lasted until his own passing into Paradise.

A great deal of misconception exists as to the Prophet's Wives after the decease of Khadeeja. He married a very beautiful lady, Ayesha, and it is said that she was jealous of his late wife and once asked him if he did not love her more than Khadeeja. His reply was characteristic for he said:—"Never was a better wife than Khadeeja; she believed in me when men despised me; she relieved my wants and helped me when I was poor and looked down upon by the rest of the world." He was deeply attached to Ayesha and the other wives he married were the widows of his friends who had fallen in fighting his defensive engagements. The position of "widow" has always been a sad one in the East and it is not difficult to imagine that the tender heart of Muhammad went out to these defenceless ones whose protectors had given their lives in his glorious cause, and he did the best for them by letting them have the shelter of his home. As actual wives he had no need of them but as protector of the friendless he did the right thing and secured the blessings of many whose life would otherwise have been cheerless and unhappy. In home matters he was ever impartial and he carried into every day life, whether domestic or public, a rigid justice which gained for him the love of every class of his fellow countrymen.

During his early married life he often retired with

Khadeeja to Mt. Hira for meditation and prayer; on ~~these~~ occasions they took but little food with them and Muhammad slept very seldom and the prayerful meditations were followed by periods of ecstasy during which the secrets of nature became revealed to him and his inner faculties were awakened so that he was rendered capable of seeing coming events revealed beforehand; whatever he saw in his visions became reality on the following day.

He was approaching his 40<sup>th</sup> year, the 15<sup>th</sup> year of his married life, and was spending the month Ramadan with Khadeeja in the usual retreat on Mt. Hira when on the night of Al-Kadr there appeared to him "One mighty with power and endowed with understanding—the Apparition showed itself on the far off horizon and drew near to him and revealed unto him that which he now reveals." It was Gabriel, who held in his hand a silken cloth covered with writing and bade him read. When Muhammad pleaded his inability to decipher the writing he was told to read in the name of the Lord. After an intermission the Archangel returned and said:—"O Muhammad thou art the Apostle of God and I am Gabriel." He told Khadeeja of the marvellous apparition and, having gathered around him a few faithful friends and followers, the doctrines and instructions which had been thus miraculously imparted to him were secretly discussed, but only promulgated amongst a very few reliable disciples.

About three years later the messenger Gabriel came again, but this time with the injunction that Muhammad should preach the Faith openly. He evidently feared the result of a too hasty revelation of the Divine Message to his people, though he was of course ready to

risk anything for the Faith and to take his orders from on high, and in the dilemma he sought the advice of his wife on whose judgment he knew he could rely. Khadeeja, with 15 years of experience of Muhammad's strength of character, realized by womanly intuition the fact that the revelation was from the Highest Truth. She was aware of his sterling qualities and unhesitatingly declared that God, who recognized all that he had done for the poor and helpless, would never allow him to fail in the work that He had set before him as a messenger. Her judgment was correct as history shows.

Following Khadeeja many other members of his family accepted his teachings. Zaid, his adopted son, then Ali and Abu Bakr, who belonged to a collateral branch of the Quraish whose influence brought him five new adherents—some of them were kinsfolk of Khadeeja and the little band soon numbered 40 converts. The injunction of Gabriel to preach, rapidly brought opposition and persecution, for the new departure aroused the violent animosity of the Quraish tribesmen of Mecca and the nascent faith of Islam was subjected to a bitter hostility which can hardly be wondered at. The teaching of Muhammad meant nothing short of a holy war against idolatry—it was a direct attack on the pagan worship of idols and, as such, was looked upon as equivalent to an attack on Mecca itself; Mecca being regarded as the religious centre of Arabia a considerable loss of revenue was feared if paganism were destroyed.

The opposition soon turned to open hostility, for the persecution became systematic, sustained and violent: every indignity, incivility, and insult was brought into

play until the danger of assassination became both apparent and imminent and Muhammad took refuge in flight to Medina where he had friends and converts and was accorded a hearty welcome. In this city a mosque was erected, Muhammad taking his share with the rest in the work of construction. There is something very sacred and inspiring in the thought of this first place of worship, partly built by the Great Founder of Islam Himself, and no doubt chiefly to mark the importance of the Hijrat and birth of Islam. This event has been termed the Land-Mark of Islam for from it the Mission of Muhammad commenced.

One very notable event took place when Muhammad was closely pursued by his enemies. He was accompanied on this occasion by one friend only—Abu Bakr. The two fugitives, hotly followed by a considerable band of his implacable foes, had taken refuge in a cave with a very narrow entrance. They heard their enemies searching about near the mouth and every instant expected to be discovered, hauled out and put to death. Abu Bakr said:—"O Muhammad, we are only two and how can we hope to fight against so large a band." "Brother, it is not so: we are *three* for Allah is here with us." As it turned out a little spider had with marvellous rapidity spun its web across the mouth of the cave and when the pursuers came up, one of them said:—"They cannot be in here for, lo, a spiders' web is right across the entrance and no man can be inside the cave." Muhammad had not even asked God's help ——*he was sure of it.*

It has been said that those who take the sword shall perish by the sword but there are instances when it is

necessary to resort to the use of lethal weapons. It has for generations past been the custom for certain sects to attribute to Muslims (and generally to Jews, Turks Infidels, and Heretics) an insane desire for bloodshed. I am sorry to have to admit that the members of these sects call themselves "Christians" and that their regard for truth is completely smothered by their desire to injure the reputation of quite good people who happen to see things from a slightly different point of view. The Crusaders who attacked the Muslims in the old days took the sword in the first instance and naturally the Muslims had to protect themselves. It was the Christians who were conspicuous in the dark ages, and indeed right up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, for the cruelest torturings, burnings and murders conceivable to the mind of man.

With regard to the question of taking the sword I think I cannot do better than shortly quote from that excellent little book *The House Divided* by Khwaja Kamal-ud-din who points out that we cannot conscientiously stand aside as indifferent spectators when the liberties of an oppressed people are being trampled upon or when religious freedom is at stake. Even so gentle a teacher as Jesus Christ, had to avow that he had come to send fire and sword into the world.

"There do arise situations when the use of arms becomes an unavoidable necessity. Could Jesus view the agonies of a down-trodden people without striking a blow in their defence? And such a blow might he not, in all probability, have struck had his ministry not been cut short? Likewise, Muhammad not only permitted the use of arms under such circumstances, but made it a

high virtue, saying that Paradise lies under the shadow of the sword.

"Islam has long been stigmatized as a religion of the sword; but that is a story of bygone days. Church dignitaries themselves spared no pains during the Great War to justify warfare from the teachings of Jesus; though, by the way, a contributor to the *Islamic Review* (Vol. v. No. 9) has shown that in their sermons on war the Bishops of London and Chelmsford were walking in the steps of Muhammad rather than of the Christ . . .

"The Qur-án sanctions the use of the sword under certain circumstances. First and foremost, in the cause of religion—religion as such it must be borne in mind, and not Islam exclusively. For this, two distinct occasions have been mentioned. First, when a house of worship is in danger—be it Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, or any other—a Muslim is enjoined to shed his very blood to save it from demolition. Says the Qur-án:— 'Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them!'

"Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say: our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered; and surely Allah will help him who helps *His Cause*; Most surely Allah is strong, Mighty (Chap. XXII, v. 39—40).

"It is significant that the Mosque is mentioned last of all. This single verse has since been responsible for

the safety of all buildings dedicated to any form of worship. Notwithstanding a thousand years of Muslim rule, India is still the home of thousands of the temples of idolatry. Can history produce a parallel to such magnanimity? Where are the great and georgeous Mosques, one may ask, that were once the glory of Spain, Sicily, Southern France, Malta, and elsewhere? To pick out a solitary instance here and there of the conversion of a non-Muslim House of worship into a Mosque, is to make a mountain out of a mole-hill. Such cases—which are too rare to deserve any serious mention at all—are exceptions due to the indiscreetness on the part of individuals, and do, actually only tend to establish the rule.

“Again, the use of the sword is also permissible when freedom of conscience is at stake. Of all religions, Islam stands conspicuous in establishing a perfection of religious freedom. ‘There is no compulsion in matters religious,’ proclaims the Qur-án (Chap. II. v. 256), which has since been the Magna Charta of religion for peoples of all creeds under the rule of Islam. Not only is all interference with another’s religious views forbidden, but, should such interference be enforced at the point of the sword, it is the duty of a Muslim to repel it with the sword. In the matter of religion, none may stand between God and man. It is the birth-right of man to hold whatever conviction he deems right. Persecution of others must be resisted at all costs by a Muslim, irrespective of whether the aggrieved be a Jew, or a Christian, or of any other faith. For this purpose the Muslim is not only allowed, but enjoined, to fight until perfect religious liberty has been established. (See

Muhammad Ali's translation of the Holy Qur-án, Chap. II. v. 192, 193.)

"As regards temporal affairs, authority to wield the sword has been limited to one, and only one, case—self-defence. This provision has been further restricted by the condition that as soon as the enemy shall have suspended hostilities, and shown an inclination towards peace, then Muslims must do the same. This is a principle which Britain acted upon during the Great War; and the Church supported her. Whatever the interpretation put upon the Sermon on the Mount, the fact remains that in comporting herself as she did in the Great War, Britain followed the teaching and example of the Prophet of Arabia.

"Muhammad had to fight seven battles in all, of which the first three—the principal ones, the rest being more of the nature of skirmishes when a general state of war prevails—best illustrate the principle in question. For thirteen long years the Prophet and his comrades were the victims of inhuman persecutions at the hands of the Meccans—an historical fact admitted by friend and foe. He suffered all this without retaliation. When however things reached a pitch when his life itself was in imminent danger, some safeguard became necessary. The very night when the conspirators were to make away with him, he managed to escape with his life to Medina, in the company of his devoted friend Abu Bakr. But his enemies did not let him alone, even in this far-off refuge—150 miles from Mecca. Jealous of his success in this new place of sojourn, they made repeated efforts to nip the tender plant of Islam in the bud. In all these three battles, the locality of the battle-field is,



I think, a decisive factor showing that the Muslims were constrained to resort to the sword in sheer self-defence. The first of these was fought at Badr, 120 miles distant from Mecca, the enemy head quarters, and 30 miles from Medina. And what was the strength of the contending parties? 313 Muslims against 1000 Meccans.

"Uhud was the scene of the second battle. It was still nearer the Muslim's home of adoption—only 12 miles from Medina. The relative strength this time was about 1000 Muslims to 3000 Meccans.

"The third attack was on the town itself. Siege was laid to Medina with an army 10,000 strong. Do not these facts and figures—the locality of the action and the relative strength of the two—furnish conclusive testimony to the fact that self-defence was the only motive which prompted the Muslims to strike a blow? This is exactly the occasion when Jesus would have us sell our clothes to purchase swords. But it was left to Muhammad to illustrate also the practical application of the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, and this he did in a manner unique in the history of the world. With 10,000 men he marched against Mecca—the same Mecca which was the scene, for long years, of Muslim persecution. The town surrendered, and was occupied without the spilling of a drop of blood. The vanquished, who had spared no ingenuity in inflicting tortures on Muslims—the ringleaders of the deadly opposition, tormentors, oppressors and assassins—lay wholly at the mercy of the victors. No punishment would have been too hard for them, according to modern military laws. But was it that the 'Spirit of Truth' had to perfect the

teachings of the Preacher of the Sermon on the Mount—to lead people into ‘all truth?’ Was it for him to illustrate, in practice, the precept of Jesus, ‘Love thine enemy?’

“Summoning their leading men, he announced his decision—a decision beyond their wildest expectations of leniency—‘This day there shall be no reproach on you.’ Such a magnanimous amnesty secured to the Muslims what could never have been gained in any other way—victory over their enemies’ hearts, by love. The gulf of decades of bloodthirsty malice was bridged by a single stroke. Love was applied to anoint and heal the raw wound of hate. The great and famous dynasty of Muslim rulers—the Umayyads—to whom the world is indebted for vast treasures of art, of science and of philosophy, sprang from the descendants of the ringleader of enemies thus won over.

“So long as man is what he is, and his nature is not a true Muslim or a true Christian nature—which are at bottom (one and the same—war will remain an indispensable factor of human life.”

It is interesting to note that when Muhammad first took refuge in Medina as a fugitive the Jews formed a strong colony in Medina and at first welcomed him, expecting that he would realize their long cherished dream. Finding that his scheme was too comprehensive they became hostile to him and allied themselves with his enemies the Quraish. A protracted struggle then commenced and numerous conflicts took place.

At the battle of Badr the Muslims were victorious against heavy odds and this was followed by the battle of Uhud where the Prophet was severely wounded and

the Muslims suffered a reverse. With the fall of Mecca Arabia came under the dominion of Muhammad and the news of the capture of the Holy City spread far and wide and the heads of the chief clansmen and tribesmen of the country flocked to tender their submission or enter into a alliance with him. He virtually became the acknowledged head or un-crowned King of all the territories of Arabia from the Mediterranean to the extreme limits of the fertile Yemen district.

Following the recognition of Islam and the destruction of the pagan idols at Mecca came the time for receiving and sending deputations to the neighbouring states with a view to extending the teachings of Islam to the non-Arab races. He dispatched a letter to Maqauqis, the Christian King of Egypt, which is extant, inviting him to embrace Islam. The message was a courteously received by the King who said that he did not find him enjoin aught which he should abstain from, and did not consider him a magician or one with erroneous views, nor did he consider him a soothsayer or liar, but he considered that he showed signs of prophet-hood.

Letters were also sent to the Kings of Abyssinia, Persia, Syria, and to the chieftans of certain of the Arabian provinces. One which was written to Munzar, King of Yemen, is still preserved at Damascus. The letter to Heraclius was read by him at Jerusalem, whilst that which was sent to Chosroes was treated with contempt and torn in pieces.

When the Muslim Commonwealth was established at Medina, it was sought to enlist the sympathy of the Jews who formed an influential and numerous section of

the people. He granted them a charter embodying principles of equality, security and community of interests as well as guarantees of civil rights and perfect religious freedom. They were secured against insults and vexations and both patrons and clients were to have equal rights. All Muslims were required to hold in abhorrence all those guilty of crime. These laws constituted Muhammad Chief Magistrate and guardian of the people, their lives and liberties. Soon after the formation of the beneficent laws in their protection the treachery of the Jews compelled him to take action against them and to lay siege to their stronghold which surrendered after making a brief resistance.

The Medina Commonwealth was based on a just and equitable code of laws, the practice of usury was prohibited as also was the cornering of food-stuffs which had often proved a great hardship in times of scarcity and gave rise to much distress amongst the poor. Intemperance was discouraged as a source of moral weakness and degradation—it is hinted that our modern politicians and social reformers might pick up a great deal of useful information from the Medina Code.

With the completion of this important Code of Laws the Mission and life work of Muhammad may be said to have terminated: he had lived to see the establishment of a flourishing community in reformed Arabia; the monotheistic Faith of Islam accepted by his country and being spread beyond its border and must have experienced intense happiness at beholding the fruition of all the long years of waiting for success.

The last year of his life was spent at Medina, and the earlier part of that year was devoted to organizing

and perfecting the Commonwealth and its units and strengthening its borders.

His last days were spent with Ayesha close to the Mosque where, as long as his strength permitted, he joined in the public prayers. His strength gradually failed and in June 632 A.D. there departed the Soul of the most remarkable personality, having regard to both spiritual and material gifts ever known on earth. Endowed with a marvellous power over men his genius and inspirations seem to live over again in the great and compelling force of Islam which to-day consoles and rules the spirits of more than one third of the inhabitants of the globe. He seemed to be above the petty irritations of life: the same in power and weakness, in affluence and poverty, in triumph or in failure, ever reposing his trust and confidence in God. Abstemious, frugal and industrious, as the records of the time show, the founder of an Empire and of a world-wide religion, he was as self-effacing and humble in his fully-realized achievements as when he was a persecuted and rejected outcast from his own people.

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